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JOHN BALE

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A STUDY IN THE MINOR LITERATURE OF THE REFORMATION

BY

JESSE W. HARRIS

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PREFACE

For the use of rare books examined during the course of this study, I wish to express my deep appreciation to librarians at the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois, the Newberry Library of Chicago, and the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., and to Professor T. W. Baldwin, to whom I am further indebted for much helpful advice and encouragement. For useful criticisms of the manuscript, I am also under obligation to Professors Ernest Bernbaum, H. S. V. Jones, and F. C. Dietz, and to the editorial board of the *Illinois Studies in Language and Literature*.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Along with this tendency to exalt the unspotted aspects of the major characters of the period, there has been a tendency to attribute the qualities of courage, courtesy, and love of learning to any other individual who was born within the limits of the age. This practice has produced a serious hindrance to the ultimate evaluation of the era since it has prevented a careful appraisal of the farrago of petty creatures who give, by the sheer force of numbers, their hallmark to any age. (Allen D. C., *Francis Meres's Treatise "Poetrie," A Critical Edition*, p. 9.)

Dr. Allen's statement concerning Francis Meres and the Renaissance is even more apropos of John Bale, who died twenty-four years before Meres was born, and who was one of the "farrago of petty creatures" who left their marks on the literature of the first half of the sixteenth century. A contemporary of More, Wyatt, Cranmer, Heywood, and Udall, he recorded their lives and writings along with those of dozens of other contemporary literary men. In his own time he enjoyed a wide reputation for learning, a reputation which has, despite much adverse criticism, persisted to the present day. Since Bale's experiences as a man were so intimately associated with what he contributed to the world as an antiquarian and writer, it has seemed fitting to review his career somewhat more fully than it is set forth in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and other sources of that type. It should be remembered, however, that this biographical notice, although it is much more complete than anything yet done for Bale, is intended to be merely a setting out of facts necessary for the understanding of the author's works, and in no sense is it meant to be a complete biography.

Bale, who had his full portion of human vanity, took good care, by leaving behind three sketches of his life, that posterity should not entirely forget him. The first of these sketches, dating from 1536, is preserved in a manuscript, *Anglorum Heliades*, B. M., Harleian 3838, which is reproduced as an appendix to the present study. The second is in his *Illustrium . . . Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum . . . Summarium* (1548); and the third is in his *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae Catalogus* (1557–59). In his *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie* (1553), Bale related his experiences as an Irish

bishop. Other stray bits of biographical information are scattered here and there in one or another of the numerous books of Bale, in letters, the works of contemporaries, and the public records. By the end of his life, his reputation had so increased that a biographical notice was included in the *Bibliotheca . . . in epitomen redacta*, originally collected by Conrad Gesner, edited by J. Simler, Zürich, 1574.

Since his own time, John Bale has never failed in any age to attract attention, often of an unfavorable kind. Few biographical dictionaries, English or continental, have neglected him. This may be accounted for in part by the fact that biographical dictionaries have an amazing way of repeating each other, and, consequently, of perpetuating with equal facility both sense and nonsense. Accounts of Bale almost universally follow his own sketch in the 1557 catalogue of writers, with scant additions from other sources. These notices are legion; therefore, only a few of them can be touched upon here. In 1619, John Pits included an account of our author in his *Relationum Historicarum de Rebus Anglicis*, published at Paris. Pits based his account on Bale's own catalogue, but it is of some interest in that it gives the Roman Catholic attitude towards the notorious Carmelite apostate. The Puritans of the seventeenth century thought well of Bale, and gave him and his works liberal attention. In 1637, J. Okes included a history of Bale in his *History of Modern Protestant Divines*, published at London. Sir James Ware, in his *De scriptoribus Hiberniae*, in 1639, gave an authentic account of Bale, with a list of his writings. Thomas Fuller wrote a biographical notice of our author in his *Abel Redivivus*, 1651, giving a very loose interpretation to some of Bale's own statements. Fuller's account breaks down completely when he ventures outside of Bale's own notice. In 1735, a composite biography of Bale was published in the *General Dictionary*, at London. This is, in most respects, a very satisfactory brief account. Jöcher included a short biographical notice of Bale in the *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, at Leipzig, in 1750. The best modern accounts of Bale will be found in Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, and in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Cooper's account contains a fairly complete list of Bale's works. As pointed out above, there are numerous other short biographical notices of Bale, but, since the two last-mentioned works contain all that has been done biographically on the subject, it seems unnecessary to pursue this part of our discussion further.

In this study an attempt has been made to discover such lines of development in his works as are significant in the general field of literature. In pursuance of this idea, first a section has been devoted to a review of his work as a dramatist. One or two recent studies have ventured so far as to hint that Bale may have been of much more importance in the Cromwellian period of the English Reformation than has been generally recognized in the past. It will be pointed out later that Bale has the best claim to the title of playwright of the Cromwellian Reformation. As such he stands first among the writers of controversial plays, and is one of the earliest English dramatists about whom we know anything in particular as a man.

Although individual studies of his plays have been made heretofore, it is of great advantage to be able to study them in relation to the author's life and to his other works. Four of the five extant plays of Bale were published in 1547. The *Three Laws* was published again in 1562, and *God's Promises* was republished in 1577. Otherwise, so far as is now known, none of the other plays was published in Bale's lifetime. Professor Alois Brandl and others have pointed out the existence in the sixteenth century of a considerable Baleian school of drama. The quieting down of the religious controversy through the Elizabethan settlement and strict governmental control brought an end to the usefulness of controversial plays, and, since they were never intended for entertainment, most of these dramas were quickly forgotten.

Modern interest in Bale's dramatic pieces dates from early in the eighteenth century, when the surviving printed plays became objects of interest to the collectors of literary curiosities. In 1744, Robert Dodsley included Bale's *God's Promises* in his *Select Collection of Old Plays*, to show, as he said, the low estate from which our drama has arisen. Serious consideration of these plays did not begin until toward the last quarter of the century, when Warton gave some space to Bale and his works in *The History of English Poetry*. The discovery, early in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, of the manuscript of *King John* aroused new interest in the plays of Bale, and his true place in the history of English drama was finally recognized. In 1838, J. P. Collier edited *King John* for the Camden Society. In the same year, *God's Promises* was included by Marriott in his *Select Miracles*, published at Basle and Paris. In 1870, A. B. Grosart edited the *Temptation* for the Fuller Worthies Library. The *Three Laws* was edited in 1882 for *Anglia*, by Arnold Schröer. Since

that time, Bale's plays have been edited individually by various students of the drama, and collectively by J. S. Farmer.

The most useful study yet made of any of Bale's plays is that made by Mr. John Henry Pyle Pafford, who edited *King John* for the Malone Society in 1931. Mr. Pafford, the results of whose study were partially incorporated by Professor Boas in his *Introduction to Tudor Drama* (1933), in addition to explaining the very complex history of the manuscript, pointed out that the original version of *King John* was composed before 1536. This clarification of dates has been carried a step further in the present study. Likewise, the significance of the chronicle element in *King John* has never been worked out in detail. Previous opinions on this matter have been based almost exclusively on the content of the play. The answer, however, to this question lies partly in facts outside the play itself. Furthermore, the relation of Bale's plays to contemporary drama of the transition period deserves a fuller treatment than has previously been given to that subject. These and numerous other questions concerning the plays of Bale have been treated in the light of the author's life, his prose works, and in the light of the age which produced the controversial drama of Protestantism.

Outside the field of drama, Bale wrote numerous works,[1] most of which are either the result of his love for collecting and cataloguing or of his unfortunate inclination for controversy. For convenience, a third division has been made of his works of the chronicle type, dealing with the Protestant martyr. Bale's mania for collecting made its appearance early in his career, and, although interrupted seriously by his interest in forwarding the Protestant cause, this "madness," as it has been called by Mr. Dibdin, continued to be the great work of his life. His early connections with the Carmelite Friars led to his collecting and compiling such an array of material concerning that order as to win acclaim from some of the best authorities of our own times in that field. This work led directly to his later activity as a compiler of information about the writers of his country; and, if one wishes to consult the first extensive history of English literature, he must turn to Bale's *Illustrium . . . Summarium* of 1548. Outside the pages of Bale's catalogues there are few contemporary biographies of literary men in the first half of the sixteenth century.

[1] In the text these additional works will be treated under the headings of Literary History, Chronicle History, and Controversial Writings.

Of Bale's works as a controversialist, perhaps the less one says the better. These treatises are almost unreadable today, and, with slight exceptions, useful only as curiosities. This statement, however, does not apply to his works on the Protestant martyr, because these productions have a definite relationship to the growth of the martyr literature, and they were influential in developing the Protestant tenor which characterized historical thought long after Bale's own age. Bale's was the first strong voice raised to demand an English chronicle history more in keeping with the new religious order than were the histories in common use. In this field he exerted some influence on Hall and Holinshed, and, consequently, indirectly on some of those who used Hall and Holinshed. Some of his works of this type, notably his account of Anne Askew, have been found useful by historians from the time of John Foxe to the present day.

The list of Bale's works appended to this study has been arranged in an order intended to show the various types of materials treated by Bale and also the editions of his works both in the sixteenth century and since.

PART I

BALE'S LIFE

Chapter 2

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Robert Burton, the anatomist, has made the following apt observation on John Bale, Erasmus, Vives, and others of their kind:

> Much learning hath cracked their sconce, and taken such root, that hellebore itself can do no good, nor that renowned lanthorn of Epictetus, by which if any man studied, he should be as wise as he was.

Whatever the state of his sconce may have been, John Bale touched so many points in the life of his age that his biography is of considerable interest. He was born November 21, 1495, at the village of Cove, about five miles from the ancient seaport town of Dunwich, in the county of Suffolk.[1] He was one of the several children of Henry and Margaret Bale.[2] His parents, partly on account of their poverty, partly on account of the persuasion of some representative of the order, placed him, at the age of twelve, in the keeping of the Carmelite Friars at Norwich.[3] This step was of the utmost importance both to Bale and to the Carmelites; for the friars gave him an education, and he in turn became the most prolific historian of that order in England.[4]

Not the least important item in the equipment of the Norwich convent was a library. It contained works on a relatively wide variety of subjects, and was especially rich in indices, extracts, and tables. This library, the catalogue of which may be partially reconstructed from notices left by Bale himself in his works, was described by Bale in later years as "noble and fair."[5] Among other things, it included the history of Nennius, works on mathematics and astronomy by Nicholas of Lynne, elucidations on Aristotle, works of Josephus, and numerous other treatises.[6]

For approximately six years young Bale proceeded with his preliminary training among the friars at Norwich and perhaps else-

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[1] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 628, 702. [2] *Ibid.*, 702. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] Benedict Zimmerman and Cardinal Gasquet have in turn praised Bale as a preserver of information about his order. [5] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 468. [6] *Ibid.*

where.[7] It may be assumed that he was put through the steps usual to preparation for admission to a monastic order. First, a year of probation was necessary.[8] This year he spent at the Norwich convent, which he entered in 1507–08; this was his "native convent." He should have been taught the customs and ceremonies of his order and been given some training in Latin grammar and in rhetoric. If at the end of the year of probation his training was considered satisfactory, he should have passed on to other studies.[9]

While living among the Carmelites, young Bale began his work of recording information about his order. The exact date of his early ventures into this work is unknown. It is clear, however, that he emulated the learned men who had been members of the order in past times. In his catalogue of writers he listed his own works dealing with the Carmelite order, some of which are still extant.[10] A handy illustration of the type of work he did during those years may be found in a brief manuscript, reprinted in Fuller, in which he catalogued all the provincials of his order.[11] This list constitutes, it is said, the most complete catalogue extant of the provincials of any monastic order, in England.

His preliminary training completed, Bale sought further education at Cambridge University. He entered the university in 1514, with Robert Barnes, an Augustinian friar, who later became prior of that order in Cambridge.[12] Stephen Gardiner had entered Trinity Hall three years earlier, in 1511, the same year that Erasmus had become associated with the university.[13] Erasmus remained there for three years, teaching Greek and completing his edition of the New Testament.[14] Bale entered Jesus College at about nineteen years of age—some four or five years above the usual age of beginning Cambridge students in those days. His university career continued for ap-

[7] There is a supposition (See A. Gray, *Jesus College*, 55) that young Bale spent part of this period at Hulme. Whether this was the house of the Benedictine monks at Hulme, in Norfolk, as thought by Gray, or the convent of the Carmelites at Holn Abbey, near Alnwick, in Northumberland, is not known. However, this latter was the ancient seat of the Carmelites in England, and would seem to be the logical selection.

[8] *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907), III, 354–70.

[9] That monastic institutions often failed to live up to these ideals of training goes without saying. Especially at the opening of the sixteenth century the monastic systems of education were in a sad state of decay. "Men of learning stood aloof from the monasteries, if we may judge by the inducements which had to be held out to them." See R. H. Snape, *English Monastic Finances*, 109.

[10] Bale, J., *Illustrium . . . Summarium*, 243.

[11] Fuller, T., *Church History* (1837), II, 154. (The same list with certain variations may be found in Bale's *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, II, 59.)

[12] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 667.

[13] Muller, J. A., *Stephen Gardiner*, 6.

[14] *Ibid.*

proximately fifteen years, which was about the normal time required for the three degrees.[15]

In the course of his fifteen years in the society of Jesus College and of the University of Cambridge, Friar Bale was privileged to rub shoulders with a numerous group of young men, many of whom were destined to make history in England during the turmoil of the next half-century. Since those thrown together in a small community such as that at Jesus College probably became very well acquainted, some knowledge of Friar Bale's fellow students is of importance in arriving at an estimate of his character.[16]

The most distinguished of the Jesus College contemporaries of John Bale was Thomas Cranmer, whom Bale mentions as one of the many learned ones known by him at Cambridge. With the exception of one year, Cranmer was associated with the college during the whole of Bale's residence there, and was an influential member of the organization, as well as a decided follower of the New Learning. One of Bale's preceptors was Geoffrey Downes.[17] Downes was M.A. of Jesus in 1515, B.D. in 1521, and D.D. in 1526.[18] He was sympathetic to the doctrines of the New Learning. William Capon, who became Master of the college in 1516, was a man of liberal views in religion.[19] Thomas Goodrich, Fellow of Jesus in 1510, and M.A. in 1514, later took a prominent part in the struggle against Rome.[20] John Edmunds, Fellow of Jesus in 1517, was likewise a follower of Protestant-

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[15] Individuals varied somewhat in the amount of time spent in study for the successive degrees. The case of Thomas Cranmer, fellow student of Bale, represents about the average. Cranmer entered Jesus College in 1503, at the age of fourteen. He was B.A. in 1511–12, M.A. in 1515, "and then, as the college statutes required, devoted himself to the study of theology." See A. Gray, *Jesus College*, 51, 53. The statutes of Bishop West, 1515 and 1533, indicate that a student before entering upon the study of theology must already have attained the master's degree. See *Documents Relating to the University and Colleges of Cambridge* (1852), III, 95 ff.

[16] The society of Jesus College was to a high degree monastic. "It is," says Gray, "consciously monastic; the individual had no place in it; the community is absolutely self-contained. The barber, the two cooks, and the janitor, as much as the Master himself, are statutable members of the foundation, with their allotted chambers, their places in chapel, their allowances in hall. On rare occasions and for the honor and advantage of the College, the Master, taking with him some of the Fellows, may have *prandium* or *coena* in the parlour, otherwise all meals are taken in the hall. The *juvenes* wait upon the Master, Fellows, and Fellow-Commoners (i.e., graduates and others not on the foundation). During the meal a boy or *juvenis* reads a passage of Scripture or of some 'authentic' book. Only Latin is to be spoken within the limits of the College. Besides the two common meals there are 'bevers' (*biberia*), where all Fellows and others (except the Masters and all Doctors in College, who are each entitled to a pint of drink and a small portion of bread) assemble silently in the hall, and withdraw as soon as they have drunk . . . " See *Jesus College*, 49.

[17] Bale, J., *Illustrium . . . Summarium*, 209.

[18] Cooper, C. H., *Athenae Cantabrigienses* (1858), I, 210.

[19] *Ibid.*, 100. [20] *Ibid.*, 117.

ism.[21] Richard Harman, M.A. of Jesus in 1515, later, at Oxford, suffered imprisonment for his religious views.[22]

Of these students of Jesus College, Cranmer was perhaps the most liberal. He had close connections with the radical group in the university headed by Thomas Bilney of Trinity Hall.[23] Prominent in Bilney's group were Latimer, Barnes, Lambert, and Parker.[24] Bale, perhaps, came into contact with this group through his friendship with Friar Robert Barnes who was B.D. in 1522–23 and D.D. in 1523.[25] Barnes secretly read Luther's books and subscribed to the ideas of Bilney, who had converted him to his views.[26] Another member of this group, Matthew Parker, who had entered Corpus Christi in 1521, was a native of Norwich, in which city Bale had received his early training among the Carmelites. Soon after his arrival at Cambridge, Parker was chosen Scholar, and, after taking his first degree, became a Fellow, and later Master of Corpus Christi.[27] Hugh Latimer, a third member of the group, B.D. in 1524, later became a famous preacher and martyr to the cause of the New Learning.[28] Bale also speaks of having been familiar with the conversion of John Lambert, another of Bilney's followers.[29] Thus, Bale's path must more than once have crossed that of the outstanding Protestant agitators at Cambridge, which was in truth a hotbed of the reform party.[30]

Of Bale's own order, there appears to have been no other enrolled at Jesus College, but a small number were in attendance in various other colleges.[31] These were, namely, John Bird, John Barret, Andrew Barsham, Roger Cappe, Clement Hubbard, John Kirton, Henry Parker, and Edward Stubbes. From the days of Henry III, the

[21] *Ibid.*, 86. [22] *Ibid.*, 48.

[23] "Bilney found comfort in the writings of St. Paul, accepted the doctrine of justification by faith, insisted on the vanity of merely external rites and ceremonies, and held to the nothingness of human effort without faith in Christ, without rejecting the doctrines of the medieval church, such as Transubstantiation." See F. C. Dietz, *Political and Social History of England*, 180. [24] *Ibid.* [25] Cooper, C. H., *op. cit.*, I, 74.

[26] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments* (1870), V, 415. [27] Cooper, C. H., *op. cit.*, I, 327.

[28] *Ibid.* [29] Bale, J., *Mysterye of Inyquyte* (1545), 42.

[30] Other Cambridge students with whom Bale came into contact in later times were Nicholas Ridley, Richard Cox, Richard Taverner, John Frith, Stephen Gardiner, and Thomas Arthur. Ridley, B.A. in 1521–22, shared the stake with Latimer at Oxford, October 16, 1555. (Cooper, C. H., *op. cit.*, I, 135.) Cox, admitted to King's College in 1519, was later tutor to Prince Edward. (Cooper, C. H., *op. cit.*) Taverner, M. A. of Corpus Christi in 1530, later became one of Cromwell's propaganda makers. (*Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 698.) Frith, B.A. of King's in 1525–26, was martyred at Smithfield, July 4, 1533. (Cooper, C. H., *op. cit.*, I, 47.) Stephen Gardiner was Doctor of Canon Law in 1522, and Master of Trinity Hall in 1525. (Muller, J. A., *Stephen Gardiner*, 1.) Thomas Arthur was a follower of Bilney, and an author of plays. (Muller, J. A., *op. cit.*, 18.) [31] Cooper, C. H., *op. cit.*, I, 572.

Carmelites had maintained a house at Cambridge—"where they built a number of cells, with a handsome church cloister, dormitory and all necessary appartments, occupying altogether three acres of land or more."[32] It appears, however, that a student of Jesus had to live at his college, regardless of other affiliations. Even Cranmer, during the year of his unfortunate marriage, had to give up his fellowship and retire because he could not live at the college.[33] Regardless of this fact, fellow Carmelites at Cambridge must have had much in common. And, some, at least, of these Cambridge Carmelites seem to have had a leaning towards the New Learning. The John Bird mentioned above became provincial of the Carmelites in 1516, but, on the dissolution of his order in 1538, he stepped from his provincialship into the secular clergy, eventually attaining to the bishopric of Chester. Queen Mary deprived him of his bishopric because he was married.[34] John Barret, another of the Cambridge Carmelites, was cited a few years after he left the university for heretical teaching.[35]

It is perhaps a significant fact that practically all of the Cambridge students of whom there is any thread of information showing an acquaintanceship with Bale were young men with a decided trend towards the New Learning. Of the two universities, Cambridge was much more inclined towards the new order in religion. There had been Oxford reformers, too, but their inspiration had come from Italy and Greece; they were the Mores, Colets, Grocyns, and Linacres of the New Humanism.[36] The Cambridge reformers—the Bilneys, Cranmers, Barneses, and Latimers—were of another school. Their inspiration came from Germany and Switzerland—from Luther, Melanchthon, and Zwingli. Since so much of reform was in the air, and so many of those around Bale were actual or potential reformers, it seems most probable that the seed of revolt was planted in Friar Bale's mind during his years at Cambridge University.

Friar Bale's course of study at the university appears to have been of the orthodox type. During the course of his university training, he traveled to the continent. Writing in 1536, he pointed out that he had pursued his education not only at Cambridge but also at Toulouse and Louvain.[37] He went abroad in 1527.[38] At the Univer-

[32] Cooper, C. H., *Annals of Cambridge* (1908), I, 45. [33] Gray, A., *op. cit.*, 53.
[34] Fuller, T., *Church History*, 155. [35] *Letters and Papers, H. VIII*, IX, 76.
[36] Seebohm, F., *The Oxford Reformers* (1896).
[37] Bale, J., *Anglorum Heliades*, 111.
[38] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus* II, 221–22.

sity of Toulouse, in France, he was the guest of William Gregory, a Scotch Carmelite, who had distinguished himself in that country, where at one time, Henry VIII's sister, Mary, then Queen of France (afterwards wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk), had been his patroness.[39] Gregory offered to secure the means for Bale to continue his studies at Toulouse for a year, but such were the conditions that he felt constrained to refuse the offer.[40]

On his return to England, Friar Bale resumed his studies at Cambridge, where the degree of B.D. was conferred upon him in 1528–29.[41] This appears to be the only degree actually recorded to his credit, but as previously pointed out, it was customary for students to take the master's degree before entering upon the study of theology. Bale states in the grace concerning the B.D. degree that he had studied theology for a period of ten years.[42] Thus, if he received a master's degree, he must have acquired it in 1519. In addition to the B.D. degree which he took in 1528–29, Bale seems to have acquired the D.D. degree not long thereafter; the exact date is not ascertainable. There is no university record, we are told, of any such degree having been conferred upon him.[43] Nevertheless, the degree must have been granted to him before he left the university, or soon afterwards.[44]

An effort has been made in the above account to show something of Bale's university career, and to point out some of the influences which, judging from what actually happened to him later, must have had considerable effect in shaping his ideals. In the following section of this study, his post-university activities will be reviewed.

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[39] *Ibid.*

[40] On this matter, Bale himself says, in his *Illustrium . . . Summarium*, 218b: "*Tholosae apud istum mansuetissimi animi uirum, ad aliquot septimanas hospes eram, anno Christi domini nostri 1527. Obtulitque mihi gratis, ex intimo erga Britanniam fauore, ultra sumptus necessarios, doctoratum ex eo gymnasio theologicum, quod ei pro sola familiaritate commorarer ad annum. Quod tamen idololatricas missationes fastidiens non admisi.*"

[41] Cooper, C. H., *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, III, 68. [42] *Ibid.* [43] *Ibid.*

[44] It is stated by the Reverend Henry Christmas (*Select Works of Bale*, ix) that Bale proceeded "to the degree of Doctor of Divinity" in 1551, a little after his assumption of the rectory of Bishopstoke, in Hampshire. No authority is given for this conclusion. On the contrary, Bale was commonly known as a doctor of divinity long prior to 1551. As early as January 25, 1537, John Leland, the King's antiquary, who had been a fellow student of Bale, writing to Thomas Cromwell (*Letters and Papers*, XII, 112), speaks of our author as "Dr. Bale." In the same year, John Bale himself wrote to Cromwell (*op. cit.*, XII, 138), identifying himself as "John Bale, doctor of divinity." Venn (*Alumni Cantabrigienses*, xii), explains that in such cases, which were not infrequent, where there is no record of the degree, the Registrary may have neglected to enter it, or the candidate may have met all the requirements, and received his *testamur* from his college, but through illness or other cause may not have been admitted to a degree by the university.

Chapter 3

PRIOR OF THE CARMELITES

Friar Bale, now about thirty-five years of age, left Jesus College to begin a career which during the next three decades was to bring him into close contact with the life of his times. Roughly, these years bridge the gap between the old and the new drama in England, and Bale is a link between the old and the new. Likewise, his period is one of volcanic upheaval, in which much was destroyed. He was one of the few who recognized the value of what was being destroyed and who cared enough to make an effort to save a remnant while that was yet possible. This also was an age of vicious propaganda, none of which was more vicious than that produced by Bale himself. This phase of his career brought him at times into grave danger; often it found him in contact with some of the most astute politicians of his age—Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Cranmer, Stephen Gardiner, the Earl of Oxford, Lord Wentworth, Thomas Bigod, the Duchess of Richmond, John Ponet, and others. In the same way, his work as an antiquarian brought him into contact with many of the notable figures in that field, both in England and abroad; and, he also knew at first hand many of the writers of the period. Although much of the information concerning these matters is of a scattered, fragmentary kind, an attempt will be made in the following pages to trace Bale's contacts in these fields.

Writing in 1536, Bale states that he had been with the Carmelites at Maldon, Ipswich, and Doncaster.[1] On leaving Cambridge, he seems to have gone directly to the Carmelite convent at Maldon, in the capacity of prior. His residence, however, at Maldon was brief. By 1530 he had been transferred from Maldon to the more flourishing convent at Doncaster, where he appears likewise to have served as prior of his order.[2] At Doncaster he taught one William Broman that Christ was not really present in the sacrament of the altar.[3] This unorthodox belief Bale had imbibed, no doubt, at

[1] Bale, J., *Anglorum Heliades*, 111.

[2] John Bale's name appears in the list of priors at Doncaster about the year of 1530. See *Victoria History of the Counties of England: Yorkshire*, III, 268. This date is approximately borne out by the confession in 1535 of William Broman, who said that "one Bale, a White Friar, sometime prior of Doncaster, taught him about four years ago," etc. See *Letters and Papers*, IX, 76. The matter referred to by Broman occurred, therefore, about 1531, and, seemingly, was coincident with the incumbency of Bale as prior of Doncaster.

[3] *Letters and Papers, op. cit.*

Cambridge University, from which he had departed scarce two years before. So far as his actual belief is concerned, therefore, John Bale was altogether a Protestant as early as 1531, when he taught this doctrine to Broman.[4]

From Doncaster, John Bale went to Ipswich, where he became prior of the Carmelite convent. His name appears in the list of priors there for 1533.[5] The position at Ipswich was one of considerable importance, and was in Bale's own native county of Suffolk, not a great distance from his birthplace, at the village of Cove. Here he evidently continued in his work of compiling information concerning his order. One of the most famous of the Carmelites was Baptista Mantuanus, who had been General of the order and whose writings were popular in the sixteenth century. While yet in the fold of the Carmelites, Bale wrote a work entitled *In praefationem Fastorum Mantuani*.[6] Later, Bale translated, and in 1548 published, Mantuanus's treatise on death.[7] Unfortunately, it was not Bale's destiny to continue in these peaceful labors. The religious struggle in England had reached an acute stage, and Friar Bale, even had he wished to do so, could not have avoided taking sides in the issue.

Already at Doncaster, as indicated above, Friar Bale was to all intents and purposes a complete heretic in his religious belief, and was teaching unorthodox doctrine to others. At Ipswich he fell in with people of similar unorthodox views. One of his associates there was his old Cambridge school fellow, John Barret, who at the moment was favorably inclined to the New Learning.[8] Not far away, at Nettlestead, Suffolk, lived Thomas, Lord Wentworth, prominent in the councils of the party of the New Learning.[9] Lord Wentworth was something of a politician, and, although very favorable to the cause of Thomas Cromwell, he could adjust his views to suit the occasion. Born in 1501, he was educated at Cambridge, and succeeded his father in 1528. He was closely related by blood to some of the most influential people of the court. His grandfather on his mother's side was the notorious Sir James Tyrrel, one of the supposed murderers of the Princes in the tower.[10] Thomas Wentworth

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[4] This belief, which was to be Bale's during the rest of his career, in due course was to be the cause of many another non-conformist's being led to the stake. See Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*.

[5] *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, X, 199.

[6] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 703.

[7] *Idem*, *Index Britanniae Scriptorum* (1902), 180.

[8] *Idem*, *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, II, 112.

[9] Merrill, L. R., *Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald* (1925), 438.

[10] *Ibid.*

was a first cousin to Edward Seymour, later Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England.[11] Lord Wentworth was also a first cousin to Jane Seymour, wife of Henry VIII and mother of Edward VI. He took a prominent part in the king's divorce and other matters of state, and was co-worker of Thomas Cromwell in setting up the new religious order in England.[12] Lord Wentworth, it may be noted in passing, was also in position to profit a great deal by the destruction of the monasteries, which destruction was close at hand.

When Bale fell in with this powerful member of the party of the New Learning, he was already, as previously observed, in a receptive mood for a thorough reformation. There is some probability that Bale's mood may have been influenced by a young lady named Dorothy, whom he met at some time during this period. Lord Wentworth, who must have known that the English monastic institution was doomed to a hasty extinction, convinced Friar Bale, by what arguments we know not, of the error of his way, and caused him to put aside his habit in order to become a secular priest.[13] Along with him in this venture was his fellow Carmelite, John Barret,[14] a native of Lynn in Norfolk who had received his early training among the friars of his native town and at Cawbridge.[15] He was, says Bale, one of the first to come under the influence of the gospel.[16] This Barret, however, later, to Bale's chagrin, had a relapse to his old faith, which Bale describes with his customary lack of delicacy.[17]

Bale fails to specify the date of his reformation, but circumstances indicate that this event took place in the latter part of 1533. He himself stated that he had been a member of the friars for a period of twenty-four years.[18] He first entered the order in 1507–08. Normally, a year of probation was necessary before the supplicant was accepted into the brotherhood. If we allow for this year of probation, we find that the date must have been not later than 1533. Moreover, this event could not have been earlier than 1533, for, as previously demonstrated, he became prior of the Ipswich convent in that year.

To make his separation from the friars complete, and, as he put it, in obedience to divine command, he immediately took a wife.[19] Her name was Dorothy, and she remained faithful to the ex-friar through

[11] *Ibid.* [12] Gairdner, J., *Lollardy and the Reformation in England* (1908), II, 160.
[13] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 702. [14] *Idem*, *Anglorum Heliades*, 111.
[15] *Idem*, *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, II, 112. [16] *Ibid.* [17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Idem*, *Pageant of the Popes* (1574), "Introduction."
[19] *Idem*, *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 702.

more than a quarter of a century of as eventful a life as one could imagine. Otherwise very little is known about her. Bale's apostasy and marriage were two acts which the Romanists could never think of with equanimity. John Pits, writing in 1619, calls Bale, "*haereticus Anglus, ab ordine Carmelitorum apostata Monachus, & Sacerdos (salva lectoris reverentia) maritatus.*"[20] At any rate, these two events marked the end of Bale's life of peaceful and quiet pursuit of his studious labors.

[20] Pits, J., *Relation. Histor. de Rebus Anglic.*, 53–59.

Chapter 4

DRAMATIST OF THE NEW LEARNING[1]

After his marriage, John Bale became a secular priest. As such, he was frowned upon by John Stokesley, the heretic-hunting bishop of London, who suspended him from preaching in Essex because he would not leave the gospel and be sworn to the observation of Stokesley's injunctions.[2] Next, he was installed in the vicarage of Thorndon, in Suffolk, on or near the Duke of Suffolk's manor.

In 1534, the king sent out injunctions to all the bishops to preach his "stile and title" of Supreme Head of the English Church, and that the bishops should order the same preached by the abbots, priors, deans, archdeacons, parsons, and so on.[3] Schoolmasters were to teach the new title, and sheriffs were ordered to report any cases of laxness in enforcing these injunctions. John Bale, who was not a man to do anything in a half-hearted way, adopted the new order of things with great gusto. In 1534, he was examined by Archbishop Edward Lee, at Doncaster, concerning his attitude on honoring and praying to saints.[4] On this occasion Thomas Cromwell came to Bale's rescue.[5] About this same time, also, Bale appears in the service of John Vere, Earl of Oxford, for whom he wrote a series of plays, intended for use as Reformation propaganda.[6]

Meanwhile, in addition to these activities, Bale continued his work as a compiler of information. His friend John Leland, who had been appointed by Henry VIII to gather information concerning the literary and learned monuments throughout the kingdom, encouraged him to continue his compilations regarding the Carmelites. In a letter from Ipswich, in 1536, Bale expressed great enthusiasm regarding this work, and indicated his willingness to do his part in the preservation of the historical records of the kingdom.[7] This work, however, was again interrupted by a growing interest in the religious struggle.

Bale actively interested himself in behalf of the king's cause. In 1536, he complained to Norfolk's Council against Powle Plummar

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[1] New Learning: "a term at that time appropriated to the advocates of Protestantism at large." Innes, A. D., *England Under the Tudors*, 194.

[2] Bale, J., *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe* (1543), 54, 55.

[3] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 69 ff. (Cf. Strype, J., *Ecclesiastical Mem.*, I, 267.)

[4] Bale, J., *op. cit.* [5] *Idem*, *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 702.

[6] *Idem*, *Anglorum Heliades*, 112. [7] Warton and Huddesford, *Lives* (1772), II, App. II.

and John Dyckes, who were attainted for high treason.[8] This act was typical of what was going on all over the kingdom during the domination of Cromwell. Cromwell's ear, it is said, was at every man's keyhole.[9] His informers were everywhere. Although Bale busied himself on behalf of Cromwell's party, and enjoyed Cromwell's patronage and protection, he was not, so far as known, an official informer or spy for the state. He was, nevertheless, an extremist in his zeal for the new order. No one, he insisted, ought to believe anything as infallible unless it be grounded in the Scriptures.[10] He commanded his people to learn the Paternoster, Creed, and Ten Commandments in English.[11] His language was both peremptory and indiscreet; and some of his parishioners accused him of calling them harlots and of using the word "dampnable" in the pulpit.[12] He went so far as to buttonhole some of his people in the churchyard and quiz them concerning their attitude towards the king's injunctions.[13] This conduct undoubtedly arose from a superabundance of conscientious zeal, but it was hardly the way to produce a contented set of parishioners.

Queen Anne Boleyn was executed in May, 1536. The orthodox church party hoped that with the passing of the queen the party of the New Learning had been dealt a death blow. There was a revival of activity among the papists, and numerous preachers and others had to answer for their teachings. Some of these were forced to make confessions involving others. One William Broman made a confession involving both John Bale and his former Carmelite brother, John Barret.[14] Broman reported that about four years previously (c. 1531–32) Bale had taught him that "Christ would dwell in no church made of lime and stone by men's hands, but only in heaven above, and in men's hearts in earth."[15] Moreover, Bale's outspoken preaching at Thorndon had roused the fury of the papists in his congregation. Consequently, being cited, he made formal answer to the charges brought against his preachings, pleading that the charges against him were either entirely false or arose from his enforcement of the king's injunctions.[16] This, however, proved to be only the beginning of his troubles.

Sir Humphrey Wyngfeld wrote the Duke of Suffolk, on January 8,

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[8] *Letters and Papers*, XI, 446–47.
[9] Green, J. R., *Short History of the English People* (1915), I, 322–23.
[10] *Letters and Papers, op. cit.* [11] *Ibid.* [12] *Ibid.* [13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*, IX, 76. [15] *Ibid.* [16] *Ibid.*, XI, 446–47.

1537, to report the doings of the "late prior of the White Friars in Ipswich, who preaches erroneous opinions to the people about your manor in Thorndon, who daily flock to hear him."[17] Articles that the "said prior" taught were likewise dispatched to the Duke.[18] Bale's preaching, so Wyngfeld reported, was causing "great rumors and quarrels among the people."[19] Most of Bale's difficulties came as a result of operations of the duke's servant, Thomas Bek, and of one Kyrke, the duke's bailiff.[20] The Duke of Suffolk evidently had no intention of harboring such a disturber of the public peace, for Bale was shortly seized and placed in detention at Greenwich, within the jurisdiction of Stokesley, Bishop of London.[21] But, through the intercession of Thomas Cromwell, measures were soon taken to procure his release.

John Leland wrote to Cromwell, January 25, 1537, in Bale's behalf, "If this man be not monstrously changed he has learning, judgment, and modesty, and is worthy a better fortune than to be a poor parish priest."[22] A brother also came to Bale's assistance by procuring the signatures of many of his parishioners upon a certificate, which he carried up to London.[23] In his own defense, Bale appealed directly to Cromwell. For the sake of God and the king, he told Cromwell, he was suffering "such vileness, stink, penury, cold, and other incommodities as the prison containeth, with opprobrious rebukes of my keepers and open shame of the world."[24] Responsibility for his plight, he laid to Kyrke, the bailiff, who had likewise been busy "a-making" against Cromwell himself.[25] "I have," he said, "heard your honor, my lord of Canterbury, of Hely, of Worcester, of Salisbury, St. David's and others slanderously reported."[26] Cromwell, who had use for men of Bale's kidney, brought him safely out of the clutches of the heretic-hunting Bishop Stokesley, of whom Foxe reports, "he did boast himself, even when he was at the point of death, giving thanks unto God with a loud voice, that he had sent thirty-one heretics unto the infernal fire."[27]

Thus, the reformed friar found he must pay the price of nonconformity. People taunted him and called him "friar," an appellation which he was "not ashamed of, no more than Paul was when he reported himself once a Pharisee and a persecutor."[28] As an apostate

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[17] *Ibid.*, XII, 22. [18] *Ibid.* [19] *Ibid.* [20] *Ibid.* [21] *Ibid.*, 112.
[22] *Ibid.* [23] *Ibid.* [24] *Ibid.*, 138–39. [25] *Ibid.* [26] *Ibid.*
[27] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, III, 104. (See, also, *D.N.B.*, XVIII, 1291.)
[28] *Letters and Papers*, XI, 446–47.

friar, a married priest, and a follower of the New Learning, he was a very likely candidate for the stake. Only the friendly hand of Thomas Cromwell, who recognized his usefulness in the work then afoot, saved him from his enemies.

In order to popularize his own policies and discredit those of the opposition, Cromwell adapted various propagandist devices to suit his purposes.[29] Makers of propaganda were employed by him to slander the Pope and the Catholic Church. For example, Richard Taverner, who had been a fellow student of Bale at Cambridge, was requested by Cromwell to write in behalf of the new order.[30] John Rastell, said by Bale to have been converted by John Frith, busied himself both in composing and printing works for Cromwell's cause.[31] Ambitious makers of plays wrote to Cromwell offering their wares.[32] Numerous books and pamphlets, some of them officially sanctioned, were put forth to further the movement in religion. Stephen Gardiner himself, in 1535, published his *De vera Obedientia* in defense of the king's position in the struggle with the Pope. Bonner, later one of the most hated of the orthodox bishops, wrote an introduction for one of the editions of Gardiner's book.[33] These were only a few of the many examples of the propaganda used in the highly organized drive by Cromwell to free England from Rome. Most of this, it may be noted, was either officially sanctioned and suggested by Cromwell, or winked at from official quarters.

In this movement John Bale played a part. He was the playwright-propagandist of the Cromwellian era, protected and rewarded by Cromwell. As previously indicated, Bale had already composed a series of plays for the Earl of Oxford, and had been favored by Cromwell because of some "comedies" he had written. On his release from detention at Greenwich, or shortly thereafter (c. 1537), Bale revised his list of plays and added new ones, in preparation for an active campaign.[34] These plays, as will be explained more fully in

[29] "As he was most studious himself," says John Foxe (*Acts and Monuments*, V, 403), "in a flagrant zeal to set forward the truth of the gospel, seeking all means and ways to beat down false religion, and to advance the truth, so he always retained unto him and about him such as could be found helpers and furtherers of the same; in the number of whom were sundry and divers fresh and quick wits . . . ; by whose industry . . . divers excellent both ballads and books were contrived and set abroad, concerning the suppression of the Pope . . . " (See also Strype, J., *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, I, 292.)

[30] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 698.

[31] Reed, A. W., *Early Tudor Drama*, 21–27.

[32] *Letters and Papers*, XII, 244.

[33] See pp. 50 ff.

[34] Payments by Cromwell indicate that this company was active in 1538 and 1539. (See page 100.) Bale's activities during this period of his career can be surmised in a somewhat vague and hazy way. It seems probable that he was in some way associated with the court,

another place, were in close conformity with Cromwell's campaign to separate the English church from Rome, to destroy images, and to free the church of superstitions.[35] To the end of bringing these plays before the public, Bale organized a company of players. The fact that Cromwell lent financial support indicates that Bale's company was organized with Cromwell's full approval, possibly at his suggestion. Bale himself has testified to the fact that Cromwell protected him from his enemies on account of some of his plays.[36]

One of the objects of this movement was the destruction of the monasteries and the confiscation of their properties. Bale and others of his kind had been consoled by the intimation that part of the proceeds of this confiscation of monastic wealth would be used to succor the poor, and to give regular salaries to the preachers of the new doctrine. It was, therefore, a somewhat disillusioned Bale who two or three years later, from the vantage of an exile with empty pockets, wrote that the greater part of the wealth thus seized had been turned to "the upholding of dice-playing, masking, and banqueting." Zealots of Bale's kind were not long in discovering that, after their "betters" had taken what they wanted, there was a decided cooling off in the ambition to carry out a complete reformation in religion. Clear warnings of what these extremists might expect were not long in coming. In 1538, John Lambert, chaplain of the English House at Antwerp, was summoned to London, where he was tried, condemned, and executed for his religious opinions.[37] Another ominous warning was given in 1539, in the injunctions in the name of the king, forbidding anyone, without special license of the king, to bring any manner of English book into the country, or "publish or sell any such."[38]

In 1540, Thomas Cromwell, who had been a mighty protecting

and it is not impossible that his company of players may have been the same company roughly identifiable as Cromwell's own in the records. In his biography of Robert Wakefield (See *Illustrium . . . Summarium*, 225) he speaks of having established a close friendship with that person at the court of the king, about the year of 1536.

[35] In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, the matter is merely touched on at this point. For a more complete discussion, see Part II. [36] See pp. 100 ff.

[37] King Henry VIII in person sat in judgment on Lambert, who stoutly made his defense. On Lambert's throwing himself upon the mercy of the king, Henry VIII gave sufficient indication of where he stood in matters of religion. "If you do commit yourself unto my judgment," said the king, "you must die, for I will not be a patron of heretics." Lambert suffered a terrible death by fire at Smithfield, where, so it is reported, his executioners, after his legs had been burned to the stumps, lifted him up with their pikes, but he did not waver from his resolution. See Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 234 ff.; also, *D.N.B.*, XI, 452.

[38] Foxe, J., *op. cit.*, VI, 258. See, also, Reusch, H., *Die Indices Librorum Prohibitorum des Sechzehnten Jahrhunderts.*

bulwark to the teachers, preachers, playwrights, and printers of the New Learning, fell from power. He was beheaded on July 28, 1540. His death left his followers in a very dangerous position. Some were executed; some fled to the continent; and many more hastily reversed their positions. John Bale, had he so desired, could not very well have reversed his position, and there is no evidence that he had any such desire. On the contrary, he remained loyal to his fallen protector. In the summer of 1540, he came to Cromwell's defense by intruding a pamphlet into the famous flyting match of Thomas Smith and William Gray.[39] Thomas Smith, who describes himself as "servaunt to the kynges royall maiestye" and "clerk of the Quenes graces counsell though most Vnworthy," began the controversy in a little tract entitled: *A lytell treatyse agaynst sedicyous Persons*.[40] One William Gray replied to Smith's charges. This led to an exchange, in which others took part. In Bale's list of his own English works, the following title appears: *Pro Grayo contra Smithum*.[41] Hence, it is easy to infer his part in the controversy.

Meanwhile, on July 30, 1540, Bale's ancient friend, Dr. Robert Barnes, for the sake of his religious opinions, perished at the stake, along with two other Protestants, Garret and Jerome.[42] With these three, probably to demonstrate the unbiased opinion of the council, three Romanists were also burned. Bale came to the defense of Barnes, with a pamphlet in English, *Apologia pro Barnes*.[43] He further defended his friend in an unidentified English pamphlet, listed among his works as *Adversus imposterem Standicium*.[44] This has to do with a general dispute concerning Stephen Gardiner's responsibility for the death of Barnes. In his *Protestation* at the stake, Barnes prayed forgiveness for Gardiner.[45] John Standish wrote a refutation of this, in which he defended Gardiner.[46] Miles Coverdale, who had been a follower of Barnes at Cambridge, answered Standish.[47] Bale's composition, which does not appear to have been noted previously in connection with this controversy, was evidently written as a further refutation of Standish, whose conduct in attacking a man already dead Bale considered reprehensible. "No small labour," he wrote in another place, "took Standish in hand in Whittington

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[39] Seven tracts reprinted in Huth's *Fugitive Tracts* (1871).
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 704.
[42] Froude, J. A., *History of England* (1868), III, 480.
[43] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 704.
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] Muller, J., *Stephen Gardiner*, 356–57.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] Reprinted by Parker Society, 1896.

College, when he made his more than foolish book of reproach against Barnes being dead."[48]

John Bale's various activities during the years from his conversion in 1533 until the death of Cromwell in 1540 had made him a marked man. The orthodox bishops had already on two or three occasions examined him on the articles of his faith. As one who denied the real presence in the sacrament, he was not likely to receive very favorable consideration from the bishops. He was a married priest, and married priests were not in favor in orthodox circles. In addition, he was a maker of unorthodox plays, and an actor in them. All these things explain why Bale found it expedient to shake the dust of his native land from off his feet, and seek refuge abroad.

[48] Bale, J., *Image of Both Churches* (1849), 429.

Chapter 5

FIRST EXILE IN GERMANY

To escape persecution at the hands of the bishops, Bale with his family fled into lower Germany.[1] "And so did I, poor creature," he wrote during his exile, "with my poor wife and children, at the gathering of this present commentary, fleeing into Germany for the same."[2] His movements during his exile are somewhat difficult to follow. Writing a few years later, he speaks of a Hollander named Leonarde, "who knew me in Nortwick, with Maistre Iohan Sartorius."[3] John Sartorius was a resident of Amsterdam, a philologist and theologian, who died at Delft, in 1566.[4] Some part of his exile, therefore, Bale spent in Holland. He busied himself by writing in behalf of the Reformation, and some of these works reflect his movements. If this type of testimony may be trusted, his time was fairly evenly divided between the cities of Switzerland and the Protestant states of North Germany.

From 1543 to 1545 he was perhaps in Switzerland, at Zurich and Basle. His *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe*, under the pseudonym of John Harrison, was published at Zurich, December 10, 1543, by Oliver Jackobson. Some three months previously, William Turner's *Hunting of the Romysh Fox* had been published at Basle. Turner was also a religious exile from England. Bale's presence in the city of Basle in 1544 is indicated in the conclusion to his *Epistel Exhortatorye:* "Written from Basyle a cyte of the Heluecyanes." It is possible that Bale was merely hiding his actual place of refuge, for the *Epistel*, at least one edition of it, was printed at Antwerp, in 1544.[5] Likewise, in the *Romyshe foxe*, mentioned above, Bale speaks familiarly of the printing house of Michael Hillenius, in Antwerp.[6] Furthermore, he concealed his identity by using the pseudonyms, John Harrison and Henry Stalbrydge. Moreover, his *Sir John Oldcastle* (1544) was printed in Antwerp.[7] Although Bale obviously visited the Swiss cities noted above, it is not at all certain that he resided there regularly from 1543 to 1545.[8] On the contrary, he probably

[1] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 702. [2] *Idem, Image of Both Churches*, 494.
[3] *Idem, Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, 353.
[4] Jöcher, C., *Allgemeines Gelehrten Lexicon*, IV (1897), 155.
[5] *Short Title Catalogue*, 30. [6] Bale, J., *The Romyshe foxe*, 54, 55.
[7] *Short Title Catalogue*, 30.
[8] The theory of Bale's residence in Switzerland during this period was first advanced by T. Vetter (*Englische Flüchtlinge*, 16, 17). Bale's attempt to conceal his place of refuge, however,

resided during most of this period in the cities of North Germany, and at Antwerp.

In Lower Germany, Bale came into direct contact with Lutheranism. Luther himself was still alive when Bale first arrived on the continent. When the famous German reformer died in 1546, Bale translated, for dispersal in England, an account of his passing, which was calculated to offset certain rumors which had been set afloat regarding that event.[9] Other continental reformers with whom Bale probably conferred were Melanchthon, Gesner, and others. With these men he corresponded after his return home. When he fled from Ireland, on the death of Edward VI, he carried in his luggage letters and commendations from these and other reformers, who were "desierouse of the Englishe churches antiquytees and doctrines; which letters I had receyued at Dublyne, the daye afore I came to the shippe, and not yet answered them."[10] He had much in common with Conrad Gesner, the father of bibliography. Gesner completed his studies at Basle, in 1541, and then became professor of Natural History at Zurich.[11] In 1545, Froschauer published the first part of Gesner's great catalogue of writers, which, in its final form, has been called the greatest work of its kind in the sixteenth century.[12] This catalogue contains a vast array of authors arranged alphabetically by their first names, and a short-title list of their works. Bale, at the time, was preparing a similar catalogue of English writers, the first extensive work of its kind. Speaking of Bale and Gesner, Sir James Ware says, " . . . among other learned Men, he came to have a great share of intimacy with *Conrad Gesner*, as may be gathered from the letters which passed between them."[13] A biography of Bale appears in the Simler edition of Gesner's catalogue, and Bale dedicated a portion of his last catalogue of writers to Gesner, wherein he calls him "friend and brother."[14]

How Bale and his family managed to subsist during this exile we do not know. "I have," he said, "exiled myself for ever from my own native country, kindred, friends, acquaintances (which are the

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is shown clearly by the fact that his *Mystery of Iniquity* (1545) bears the statement that it was printed at Geneva by Michael Wood. However, no such printer ever lived, or at least all efforts to identify him have been unsuccessful. M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism*, p. 58, n. 10, speaking of this same period, says, "The fact that a volume contains a colophon stating that it was printed in a certain place does not necessarily mean that the author was residing in that town at the time, even though the colophon be correct."

[9] *The true hystorie of the Christen departynge of the reverende man D. Martyne Luther.*

[10] Bale, J., *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, 356.

[11] Bay, J. C., *Bibliographical Society of America*, X, 55 ff. [12] *Ibid.*

[13] Ware, Sir J., *Works* (1754), I, 416. [14] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, II, 115.

great delights of this life), and am well contented for Jesus Christ's sake, and for the comfort of my brethern there, to suffer poverty, penury, abjection, and all that shall come besides."[15] He seems to have had considerable success in making useful friendships, and in winning the protection of those in authority. In the Protestant states of Germany, Bale appears to have won the attention of Duke John of Saxony, for whom he set forth a prayer; in the course of the prayer the duke, so the story goes, asked God, if his cause were not just, to strip him of his worldly goods and have him taken.[16] The answer to this prayer by Bale must have been somewhat disconcerting to its maker, for the Duke of Saxony was, in a very literal sense, both taken and stripped of his possessions.[17] Contemporary with the misfortune of the Duke, the papists saw a "strangeness" in the sun, and, joining the two incidents, they made a marvelous matter of it. "They happened both together," says Bishop Gardiner, "this we know, and be both marvellous; but whether the one was a token ordered to concur with the other, God knoweth, and man cannot define."[18]

By 1546, Bale's movements shift definitely to Marburg, Hesse, and to Wesel, in the Duchy of Cleves. His publications of 1546 and 1547 date regularly from Marburg, Wesel, and Antwerp. At some period of his exile, he was in Friesland and Westphalia, also. Writing in his second *Examination of Anne Askew*, published in 1547, he stated, "for I have seen their bragging letters thereof, sent from Emerick to Friesland, and from the country of Cologne into Westphalia."[19] He seems at this time to have been moving progressively in the direction of his own country, informed, as he no doubt was, of the approaching end of King Henry VIII. As early as 1545, he had expressed hope of better things from the king's young son, Prince Edward, whom, so he declared, "the Lord hath sent for the singular comfort of England."[20]

Meanwhile, Bale's books and pamphlets had won him a name and a place among the leading controversial writers of the age. On July 8, 1546, "A Proclamation" was issued "for the abolishing of English

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[15] *Image of Both Churches*, 260.

[16] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, VI, 32. See also, Muller, J., *Stephen Gardiner.*

[17] Duke John Frederic of Saxony, a leading Protestant Prince in Germany, at the beginning of 1547 was deposed by the Emperor. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Mühlberg, April 24, 1547. (Gairdner, J., *Lollardy and the Reformation*, III, 143). Bale's prayer had been made in 1546. [18] Foxe, J., *op. cit.* See also, Muller, J., *Stephen Gardiner.*

[19] Bale, J., *Examinacyon of Anne Askewe*, 221.

[20] *Idem*, *Image of Both Churches*, 443.

Books, after the Death of Anne Askew, set forth by the King."[21] It forbade any "man, woman, or person, of what estate, condition, or degree soever" to "receive, have, take, or keep in his or their possession, the text of the New Testament, of Tyndale's or Coverdale's translation in English," or "any manner of books printed or written in the English tongue, which be or shall be, set forth in the names of Frith, Tyndale, Wickliff, Joy, Roy, Basil, Bale, Barnes, Coverdale, Turner, Tracy, or by any of them."[22] The prominence which Bale had attained as a controversialist is witnessed by the fact that on the basis of the above proclamation more than two dozen books attributed to him were burned at Paul's Cross, by Bishop Bonner.[23] About a third of these works can still be identified as those of Bale.[24]

In this same year (1546), the Mayor of London was ordered to examine "Holland the Searcheour, and Morton the grocer's prentyce in Buckelsbury, touching certaine heretike bokes of Bale's making lately broughte in a hoye of Flaunders, &c."[25] By such means did Bale's books find their way into England for distribution. John Geffrye, a Welshman, in 1546, was accused by one Kingesmytte of possessing one of Bale's books, and of making certain prophecies.[26] The Welshman was submitted to the "Marshalsey." As will be shown a little later in this discussion, Bale's books, especially his *Examinacyon of Anne Askewe* printed at Marburg in 1546, and his translation entitled *The Christian Departing of D. Martin Luther*, were soon scattered about in England, and greatly vexed Bishop Stephen Gardiner, who had no love for Martin Luther, and who had been busy in bringing Anne Askew to the stake.

Bale, in 1546–47, probably was in Antwerp, where his play *Three Laws* was published.[27] He was no doubt anticipating an early return to England, where the pro-Protestant party had seized control of the government immediately upon the death of Henry VIII, January 25, 1547. His hopes of an era more to his liking were realized when the nine-year-old Prince Edward mounted the throne, and the actual powers of government were taken over by a council of regents of strong Protestant bias, headed by Edward Seymour, the King's

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[21] Foxe, J., *op. cit.*, V, 565 ff. See also, Reusch, H., *Die Indices Librorum Prohibitorum, etc.*
[22] *Ibid.* [23] *Ibid.*
[24] The following are Bale's works: *A Brief Chronicle of . . . John Oldcastle; A Preface against . . . John Huntington; A Mystery of Iniquity; The Image of both Churches; Second & Third part of The Image . . . ; Disclosing of the Man of Sin . . . ; Epistel Exhortatorye; Compendius Letter . . . John Pomerane . . .* [25] *Acts of the Privy Council 1542–1547*, I, 409.
[26] *Ibid.*, 509. [27] *Short Title Catalogue*, 30.

uncle, and blood cousin of the same Lord Wentworth who had been instrumental in the reformation of Bale c. 1533. Bale himself did not have to wait long before his name was abruptly called to the attention of the new Lord Protector in a manner which must have reacted in his favor, for it was done by the staunch old standard bearer of the orthodox party, Stephen Gardiner.

In 1547, Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, sent two books in English by Bale (the works on Luther and Anne Askew), to the Lord Protector, which books he characterized as "very pernicious, seditious, and slanderous."[28] In fact, he had dealt somewhat severely with Winchester, not only giving him a good part of the credit for causing the death of Anne Askew, but also calling him the "Pope's great dancing bear," the "great Caiphas of Winchester," and other equally ingratiating names.[29] It appears, however, that Gardiner was genuinely aggrieved at the disturbance which he foresaw as the inevitable result of the teachings of Bale and others.[30] It is true, as Gardiner pointed out to the Protector, that Bale's ideas were not at all consistent, supporting as he did on the one hand, the sacramentary, Anne Askew, and on the other, Martin Luther.[31] To Bishop Gardiner, Bale and his kind were nothing but disturbers of the established order in religion.[32] And, to be sure, he was exactly right in his con-

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[28] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, VI, 30 ff. See also, Muller, J., *Stephen Gardiner.*

[29] Bale, J., *Examinacyon of Anne Askewe*, 182, 219.

[30] "For it grieveth me not a little to see, so soon after my late sovereign lord and master's death, a book spread abroad more to his dishonour (if a prince's honour may be by vile inferior subjects impeached) than professed enemies have imagined, to note a woman to have suffered under him as a martyr; and the woman therewith to be, by Bale's own elucidation (as he calleth it) so set forth and painted as she appeareth to be, and is boasted to be, a sacramentary, and by the laws worthy (as she suffered) the pains of death . . . for other fruit cannot Bale's teaching have, nor the teaching of such others as go about to trouble the agreement established here." See *Letter of Winchester to the Lord Protector*, reprinted in *Acts and Monuments*, VI, 30 ff.

[31] " . . . I have perceived by books written without authority, as by Master Bale, Joy, and others, and especially as Bale useth now, that Scripture doth, by abuse, service to the right hand and the left at once, insomuch as at one time Bale praiseth Luther, and setteth his death forth in English, with commendation as of a saint; which Luther (whatsoever he was otherwise) stoutly affirmed the presence really of Christ's natural body in the sacrament of the altar. And yet Bale, the noble clerk, would have Anne Askew, blasphemously denying the presence of Christ's natural body, to be taken for a saint also." See Foxe, J., *op. cit.*

[32] "Certain printers, players, and preachers, make a wonderment, as though we knew not yet how to be justified, nor what sacraments we should have. And if the agreement in religion made in the time of our late sovereign lord be of no force in their judgment, what establishment could any new agreement have? and every uncertainty is noisome to any realm. And where every man will be master, there must needs be uncertainty. And one thing is marvellous, that at the same time it is taught that all men be liars, at the selfsame time almost every man would be believed; and amongst them Bale, when his untruth appeareth evidently in setting forth the examination of Anne Askew, which is utterly misreported." *Ibid.*

tention, for the Protestants certainly had no intention of leaning so far in the direction of Rome as the conservatives had been leaning during the last few years of Henry VIII. His protests went for naught. The new administration received his suggestions coldly, and it was not long until Gardiner himself was lodged in the Tower, destined to remain a prisoner for the remainder of the reign of Edward VI. However, the Protector at the moment tolerated Gardiner's interference, and answered his letter.[33] This answer gives hints of a tolerant disposition on the part of the Lord Protector, and a desire to curb the intolerable cruelty that has left such a blot on the history of the period.[34] It is impossible, he points out, to throttle the curiosity of idle people about such things. "The people," he says, "buy those foolish ballads of Jack-a-Lent. So bought they in times past pardons, and carols, and Robin Hood's tales."[35] Nevertheless, Lent still remains, and probably will continue to remain.

That Bale's books were in demand, even in Winchester, is testified by Gardiner himself, in another message to the Lord Protector, on June 6, 1547.[36] "And as for Bale's books, called the Elucidation of Anne Askew's Martyrdom, they were in these parts common, some with leaves unglued, where Master Paget was spoken of; and some with leaves glued."[37] Gardiner himself had seen "at the least four of them."[38] He further relates that Bale's book on Luther "was brought down into this country by an honest gentleman, to whom it was (as I remember he told me) given at London for news; and he had it a great while ere I wrote to your grace."[39]

Regardless of Bishop Gardiner's objections to the ideas of Bale, he was shortly either granted permission to return to England, or recalled from his exile by the new king, thus ending an enforced residence abroad of eight years duration.

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[33] *Ibid.*, 34.
[34] "We do study to do all things attemperately, and with quiet and good order . . . " *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.* [36] *Ibid.*, 36 ff. [37] *Ibid.* [38] *Ibid.* [39] *Ibid.*

Chapter 6

LONDON AND BISHOPSTOKE

About 1547 or 1548 John Bale returned from abroad to England.[1] At London, he found shelter in the house of Marie, Duchess of Richmond.[2] The Duchess Marie, formerly waiting maid to Queen Anne Boleyn, and the wife of Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond, a natural son of Henry VIII, occupied at that time Montjoy House, Knight Rider Street, London.[3] In this hospitable household, Bale cemented a lasting friendship with John Foxe, the martyrologist, who had likewise been befriended by the Duchess.[4] Master Foxe, it is said, had come up to London c. 1547–48, and had been in danger of starvation when the Duchess of Richmond relieved his distress by admitting him to her household—being at the time "spent with long fasting, his countenance thin, and eyes hollow."[5] Ten years after his first meeting with Foxe in Montjoy House, John Bale could speak of him as having been during all those years his *Achates*.[6]

During this brief period of his career, which lasted until 1551, Bale appears somewhat vaguely as one of an equally indistinct group of fairly prominent figures of the Reformation, who were interested in promoting their cause by writing and other means. This group seems to have hovered in the outskirts of the court of Edward VI. It has already been noted that the Lord Protector's attention had been attracted to Bale by the protest of Stephen Gardiner. Bale also appears to have gained access to the king himself, for a year or two later at Winchester he was recognized by Edward.[7] The frontispiece of Bale's *Illustrium . . . Summarium* (1548) shows the author pre-

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[1] The exact date of Bale's return to England, and the circumstances surrounding that return, are matters about which there has been some conjecture. That he could not have been back in England for the coronation ceremonies of Edward VI, in February, 1547, seems evident. He states in his autobiographies, in both *Illustrium . . . Summarium* (1548) and *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus* (1557), that he spent eight years abroad after the death of Cromwell in 1540. Although he was still in England in the summer of 1540, he seems to have fled the country during that same year. It seems equally certain that he was back in England in 1548. His autobiography in his 1548 catalogue indicates that he was already in England when he wrote that account of himself. There has also been some speculation about whether he was recalled or whether he returned after obtaining permission. Apparently he was not recalled but returned only after permission had been granted for him to do so. Writing in 1548, he stated: "*In patriam tandem post longum exilium pijssimi regis Edwardi sexti suffragiis liberis, anno hoc a Christi incarnatione, 1548, & aetatis meae. liii. finitis his laboribus, et dño fortunante reditu maturo.*" (*Illustrium . . . Summarium*, 244b.) [2] Foxe, J., *op. cit.*, III, 705.

[3] Townsend, G., *Life of John Foxe*, 9. [4] *Ibid.* [5] *Ibid.*

[6] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 733. [7] See p. 42.

senting a copy of his book to the youthful monarch. Others in this group were Foxe, who lived in the same house with Bale, John Cheke, who gave Bale access to some of John Leland's manuscripts, John Ponet, later Bishop of Winchester, John Philpot, and perhaps other reformers.

John Foxe speaks of having been privy "that the said John, in recognising his Centuries, followed altogether the history of Leland 'De Catalogo virorum illustrium;' which book, being borrowed of Master Cheke, I myself did see in the hands of the aforesaid John Bale, what time we were both together, dwelling in the house of the noble lady the Duchess of Richmond."[8] Shortly after the death of Henry VIII, John Leland, who was Bale's friend of long standing, had become subject to an incurable melancholy, which had deprived him entirely of his reason. Since his appointment as the King's Antiquary, in 1533, Leland had spent his time in traveling over the kingdom investigating, among other things, the libraries "belonging to the several cathedrals, monasteries, convents, etc."[9] After his travels, he is said to have devoted some six years to putting into shape the great mass of information which he had collected. His condition made it impossible for him to prepare this material for the printers. In this state of affairs, Bale took up and published Leland's address to the king, with Bale's own declarations. Although his edition of Leland's *New Year's Gift* was no doubt done partly out of respect for his old friend, at the same time it was a bid for support for an enlarged version of his own catalogue of writers. For at the end of his account, he calls attention to his efforts in this direction, and, also, gives a great list of writers which he proposed to include in his new work.[10] This was doubtless the work he was busy with when Foxe was with him in the house of the Duchess of Richmond. He probably secured the manuscript of Leland's work, *The New Year's Gift*, from John Cheke, who supplied him, according to Foxe, with Leland's *De Catalogo virorum illustrium*.

During this period, Bale pursued his investigations in various libraries, in order to correct and augment his catalogue of writers. "These are the notable writers," he states, "whose names I have gathered, & whose manifold doctrine I am redy to shew, yf the lord make me of power to perfourme it besides the diligent recognicion

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[8] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, III, 705.
[9] Copinger, W. A., *Leland's New Year's Gift* (1895), ii. [10] *Ibid.*, 111 ff.

& increacementes of my first labors."[11] These investigations took him to various libraries at Cambridge, Oxford, and elsewhere. In the city of London, he found only one library.[12] He also frequented the shops of the stationers and bookbinders, where he found many works, of which he copied out the dates, titles, and beginnings.[13] At this time, too, he visited Norwich, familiar to him from childhood when he had been a novice among the Carmelite Friars there. The Carmelites of Norwich had boasted a relatively fine library, and it was with real regret that Bale noted that the "library monumentes" of the city were turned to the use of grocers, candle-makers, and so on.[14] Bale, however, took advantage of the opportunity to make a great collection of these books and manuscripts, two "great wayne loades" of which he carried over to Ireland with him not long thereafter.[15] "And," he wrote to Matthew Parker a few years later, "as concernynge bokes of antiquitite, not printed: whan I was in Irelande I had great plenty of them, whome I obtayned in tyme of the lamentable spyle of the lybraryes of Englande, through muche fryndeshypp, labour and expenses."[16] Thus, although he shows no sympathy with the monks and friars, he everywhere shows a sincere regret that the contents of the monastic libraries were scattered and destroyed in so wanton a manner.

It is probable that his investigations in the Oxford libraries brought him into contact for the first time with the poet Nicholas Grimald, who at the time was associated with one of the colleges there. There is no evidence apparently of any previous friendship between the two men.[17] Afterwards, however, letters passed between them, and Bale devoted some space in his catalogue of writers to Grimald, who addressed him as "friend John Bale."[18] The friendship

[11] *Ibid.*, 107. [12] *Ibid.* [13] *Ibid.* [14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Cambridge Antiquary Society*, III, 158. [16] *Ibid.*, 157.

[17] The assumption by L. R. Merrill (*Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, 13), that Grimald and Bale were friends from an earlier date, does not seem very probable. Born c. 1519–20, Grimald was a youthful student of twenty-one years when Bale fled to the continent in 1540. Until the publication of his *Christus Redivivus*, in 1543, Grimald had produced nothing to bring him into prominence. "It does not seem unlikely," Merrill says, "that Bale arranged for the publication of the two plays of Grimald, *Christus Redivivus* and *Archipropheta*, by Martin Gymnicus." No evidence is given to support this contention. If this had been true, Bale, it seems reasonable to believe, would have included some account of Grimald in his *Illustrium . . . Summarium* (1548), but no mention is made of Grimald. Bale is silent concerning Grimald previous to the making of his manuscript notebook, which he began after the publication of his first catalogue in 1548. In his *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus* (1557–59), Bale lists a collection of letters from Grimald, under the title *Ad amicum Joan. Baleum.* In the notebook this entry reads *Epistolas quasdam ad Baleum.* Bale also cites works as being in Grimald's library or study. [18] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 701.

of Bale and Grimald is an example of the former's ability to make lasting connections with men of temperaments vastly different from his own, for Grimald seems to have been a man of curiously shifty and vacillating character, lacking in the firmness which characterized Bale himself.

Probably about this time John Bale paid a visit to the establishment of the now famous schoolmaster of Hitchin, Ralph Radclif. This Radclif was an amateur playwright and stage director.[19] He had established his school in a building which had formerly been the property of the Carmelite Friars, and in it he had erected a stage, upon which his boys acted plays of the schoolmaster's own composition. Bale, who had by no means lost interest in the drama as a device for teaching the people, was highly pleased with both Radclif's stage and his plays.[20] In fact, for the better training of his two young sons, John and Paul, Bale had lately written a dramatic dialogue based on Scripture.[21]

Despite Bale's numerous activities, and contacts with leaders in the new government, he was not successful in getting a good appointment in the service of the party then in control. When John Ponet succeeded to the bishopric of Winchester, in 1551, he carried with him John Bale, Hugo Goodaker, and John Philpot. Goodaker was Ponet's chaplain at Winchester, and Philpot was archdeacon. Bale was collated as rector of Bishopstoke, Hampshire, on June 26, 1551, by Bishop Ponet.[22]

Bishopstoke was a small village, five miles from the city of Southampton, and between South Stoneham and Bambridge.[23] In his new location Bale was not destined to happiness. Some of his books, as previously noted, had already filtered down into this part of England, and a few at least of the Romanists of the district must have been familiar with his reputation. At any rate, the local papists soon found ways to annoy and insult the new rector, whose doctrines were so much opposed to their own teachings. When the rector walked abroad on the streets, these papists pulled at their beards and stared at him "lyke wylde oxen," and at times they resorted to "dagger-drawynge and fyste lyftynge."[24] On September 20, 1551, he attended a religious service conducted by a local priest, who was of the old order. The rector was greatly offended. "Suche

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[19] *Idem, Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, 332–33. [20] *Ibid.*
[21] See list of Bale's works. [22] *Catholic Record Society*, XXVII, 3.
[23] *Ibid.* [24] Bale, J., *An Expostulation, etc.*, in Camden Soc., 77, 315.

an other ape of Antichriste as that prest was never sawe I afore in my lyfe."[25] This priest carried on the service in the old popish manner, reminding Bale, lately from the vicinity of the court, twenty times of Will Somer, the famous clown.[26] "Yet," complains our author, "of them both that prest seemed the more foole a great deale; and, to amende the matter, he had than a new shaven crowne, which I rebuked him for."[27]

The priest, however, did not take kindly to Bale's criticism of his performance, for, in the house of a local gentleman, he burst into a perfect frenzy, indulging in contemptuous talk against the king and raving furiously against the new rector. And, just before Christmas of that same year, he reviled a servant who was preparing to play a part in Bale's drama of *Three Laws;* he compelled the servant to learn a passage in which Bale was called heretic and knave.[28] The rector consoled himself by composing a burning pamphlet, directed to "Johan Duke of Northumberlande, Lorde greate Maister of the Kinges most honourable housholde, and Lorde presydent of his Maiestyes most honourable prevye Counsell," in which he demanded the suppression of the aforementioned priest and others of his kind.[29]

In 1551, John Bale was promoted to the vicarage of Swaffham, in Norfolk, but succeeding events prevented his occupancy of that post.[30] In August, 1552, he fell ill of an ague, from which he had not completely recovered, when on August 15, he mounted his horse, and, although scarcely able to maintain his seat, as weak as he was, he rode the five miles from his rectory at Bishopstoke up to the city of Southampton.[31] Great matters were in the air. King Edward VI was scheduled to arrive in the city, on his progress through the south of England. This was a spectacle well worth seeing. "Edward," says Sir Clement Markham, "was accompanied by the Lord Treasurer, the officers of his household, four Kings of Arms, and two Heralds—altogether 120 mounted men."[32]

Between two and three o'clock of the same day, Bale arrived in Southampton to stand in the street "against the gallerye." In the retinue of the youthful monarch was one John Fylpot, an old friend of Bale, and two or three others of his acquaintance. Fylpot was now a groom of the privy chamber.[33] These friends spied Bale from the

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[25] *Ibid.* [26] *Ibid.* [27] *Ibid.* [28] *Ibid.* [29] *Ibid.*
[30] *Dictionary of National Biography*, III, 41.
[31] Bale, J., *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie* (1745), 338.
[32] Markham, C. R., *Life of Edward VI*, 185. [33] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 339.

window of the room where the young king was holding forth, and made friendly gestures to him.[34] They carried the news of Bale's presence to King Edward, who remembered him, and expressed surprise at his being there, having been informed beforetime that he was dead and buried.[35] Then Edward VI, King of England, went to the window to look with kindness upon the miserable Bale, and he resolved, it is said, then and there that he would make him a bishop. And, the very next day, August 16, 1552, Bale received a letter from the Council, appointing him to the bishopric of Ossory, in Ireland.[36]

The appointment was not to Bale's liking. About a month later, when the king had returned to Winchester and was resting in Bishop Ponet's house there, Bale pleaded to be released from the appointment, on the grounds of poverty, age, and illness, but to no avail. Thereupon, within six weeks, he went to the court at London, where all preparations were made for his departure to his new post.[37] A letter was dispatched by the Council "to the Deputies and Councell of Ireland in commendacion of Mr. Bale, elect Bishop of Ossorie in Ireland."[38]

On December 29, 1552, the newly appointed bishop departed from Bishopstoke for the port of Bristol. With him he had (his first consideration) his "bokes and stuffe" to the quantity of two wain loads. He was accompanied by his wife and one servant. In Bristol, he tarried twenty-six days, awaiting a favorable passage. While there, at the urgent request of the people of the city, he preached several sermons. On January 21, 1553, he and his wife sailed for the port of Waterford, in Ireland, where they arrived after two nights and two days upon the sea.[39]

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[34] *Ibid.*

[35] It is not impossible that Bale had been sent to Bishopstoke so that the court might be rid of him, for his radicalism and importunities must have made him a nuisance. The subsequent appointment to Ossory may have had the same origin, although Bale claims that Edward made it at his own volition.

[36] The letter of appointment is reprinted in Bale's *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, 339.

[37] *Ibid.* [38] *Acts of the Privy Council*, IV, 153. [39] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 340.

Chapter 7

BISHOP OF OSSORY

When the new bishop arrived in Waterford, Ireland, he discovered that all the old popish devices were still in use there. True to his character, Bale boldly told a senator of that city that he "wele perceyued that Christe had there no bishop, neyther yet the Kynges maiestie of England any faythful officer of the mayer, in suffering so horryble blasphemies."[1] In truth, the contrast between Bishop Bale and the new setting could hardly have been greater. He was a Protestant, a married priest, and a hater of images, saints, holy places, and all those things dear to the Catholic heart. Moreover, this hatred took active form. The Ireland which he entered was Catholic to the very core, a land of sacred images and holy shrines. Neither the bishop nor his Irish parishioners would compromise on these matters. Conflict was, therefore, inevitable.

From Waterford, Bale rode, the next day, towards Dublin, where he was to be consecrated Bishop of Ossory. He spent the night at Knocktower, in the house of Adam Walsh, his commissary for the diocese of Ossory. That evening, at dinner, the parish priest, one Sir Philip, shocked Bale's sense of propriety and gave him further notice of what was considered proper among the religious of Ireland, by boasting that he was a natural son of the prior of the Carmelite Friars in that town. Further, Sir Philip informed Bale that it was an honor to have for father a spiritual man, such as a bishop, an abbot, a monk, a friar, or a priest. Inasmuch as Bale had been taught that fornication is forbidden by God's law, he marveled much at this attitude among the Irish, and resolved to reform the clergy of his diocese.

In Dublin, Bale met his old friends, Hugo Goodaker and David Cooper. Goodaker had been nominated to the bishopric of Armagh, and Cooper had been named parson of Calen.

Sir Thomas Cusake, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, appointed the Archbishop of Dublin and the Bishop of Kildare, assisted by the Bishop of Duno, to consecrate Bale as Bishop of Ossory. George Browne, the Archbishop of Dublin, was anxious to delay the consecration as long as possible, because, so Bale maintains, he wanted to

[1] Bale, J., *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, 340. Unless otherwise indicated, all the material used in this chapter is based on Bale's *Vocacyon*.

secure the revenues of the diocese for his own use. To this end, Thomas Lockwood (called "blockhead" by Bale), Dean of the Cathedral Church, objected to the carrying out of the ceremony as demanded by the English Parliament. Bale persistently refused to be consecrated by any other form, and he told the Lord Chancellor, the bishops, and all those present that he was sworn to obey the laws of England and would be consecrated accordingly. Bale won the argument, and was consecrated in his own way.

Two days after his consecration, Bishop Bale fell so seriously ill that his life was despaired of. His malady held him in its grip until after Easter. But the new bishop was of strong will and tough physique. Despite his serious illness, he had himself carried to Kilkenny, the chief city of his diocese, where he preached every Sunday and every holy day in Lent. Such was his inspiration, or power of will, that he felt no manner of illness while he was in the pulpit.

A thorough follower of the Protestant Party, Bishop Bale felt conscientiously bound to reform the erring Irish of his diocese. In this ambitious enterprise, he soon discovered that his chief opponents were among his own clergy, who were completely saturated with Romish doctrine. When the new bishop set out to destroy the images, his priests revolted. "Muche were the prestes offended also," he says, "for that I had, in my preachinges, willed them to have wives of their owne, and to leave . . . other mennes wives, doughters, and servauntes." The worldly-wise priests replied that they did not care to risk losing their livings thus, and the bishop could not induce a single one of them to take a wife. An equal ill success attended his efforts to persuade his clergy to use the Book of Common Prayer of Edward VI.

To the people of Kilkenny he preached twelve sermons—enough he thought, to set them thinking in the right direction. Then, after Easter, he moved to his seat at Holmes Court, about five miles from Kilkenny, where he remained until Ascension Day. The real danger to which an English bishop of Bale's party was exposed in Ireland was suddenly brought home to him by the death of his friend Goodaker, Bishop of Armagh, whose death in Dublin was reported to be from poison administered by certain disgruntled priests of his diocese. Bale's friends wrote to warn him to be on his guard against a similar fate. Events progressed quietly, however, until July, 1553, when the death of King Edward VI brought the struggle to a climax.

By July 25, 1553, the news of the king's death had spread abroad in Bale's diocese. Bale's clergy were jubilant, for they anticipated an early deliverance from the heavy hand of this strange bishop. On July 26, Thomas Hothe, a justice, with Lord Mountgarret, went to the Cathedral Church to demand a communion in honor of Saint Anne. This was an attack on the authority of Bishop Bale, who had forbidden this ceremony on all days save Sunday. Hothe's act aroused lesser lights to a general revolt throughout the diocese. To add to the general unrest, a rumor was circulated that the young Earl of Ormond and the Baron of Upper Ossory, both of whom were at the English court in London, had been slain. One of Bale's neighbors, Mrs. Matthew King, fleeing towards Kilkenny with her servants and goods, was set upon by the Irish, who seized her possessions and murdered four of her company.

With great ceremony, the Irish of Kilkenny proclaimed Mary Tudor as Queen, on August 20, 1553. Bishop Bale did his utmost to keep down the old Popish ceremonials, but the local feeling was too strong for him. Nevertheless, he took a testament in his hand and marched to the Market Cross, a great crowd at his heels. There he preached from the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, warning of the obedience due to worldly powers and magistrates. Even here, however, his enemies had bested him, for they made a procession before him in the manner of the Romanists.

In the midst of the excitement accompanying the celebration of Mary Tudor's accession to the throne, Bale staged three of his plays at the Market Cross in Kilkenny, "with organe, plainges, and songes very aptely." It was a bold thing to do, but all the bishop's courage could not save him or his cause from the wrath of the papists.

The priests now began to boast openly that Bishop Bale would soon have to recant all his preachings. To show his contempt for such threats, on St. Bartholomew's Day he preached to the people on the text "I am not ashamed of the gospel." Sitting in the audience was that same Justice Hothe who had before-time defied his authority. But Bale had gained the friendship of Robert Shea, Mayor of Kilkenny, with whom he dined on the same day that he preached the above-mentioned sermon. After dinner, a number of priests came to dispute with him "concerninge their purgatorye and suffragese for the dead," but the bishop vanquished them on the basis of Scripture. The next day he returned with his company to his seat at Holmes Court.

Matters rapidly went from bad to worse. A plot was formulated to kill Bale. The conspirators, according to Bishop Bale, were Sir Richard Routhe, Sir James Joys (who was Bale's own chaplain), and one Barnabe Bolgar, his next neighbor. This trio had employed several "kearnes" to compass his death. At least, such is Bale's own story of the affair.

Meantime, on August 31, in Kilkenny, the old popish services were fully revived. The priests had conquered; the Puritan had lost his battle. It was a bitter potion, and brought forth bitter words. One of the worst offenders in Bale's eyes was the Bishop of Galloway, whose activity he thus describes: "The exercise of this beastly bishop is none other, but to gadde from town to towne ouer the English part, confirminge yonge children for ij. pence a pece, without examinacion of their Christen beleve, contrary to the Christen ordinaunces of Englande, and at night to drinke all at Rob Dauye and Auqa Vite, like a man: to whome, for a mocke now of late, a Galoglasse of the land brought hys dogge, wrapped in a sheet, with ij. pens about his necke, to haue him confirmed among neybers children."

The controversy came to a climax for Bale on Friday, September 8, 1553. Five of his servants, including a sixteen-year-old girl, had gone to make hay in a meadow about five miles from the bishop's house. When the haymakers reached the entrance of the meadow, they were set upon by a band of the bishop's enemies and all slain. The day on which this tragedy occurred was a holiday set aside for celebrating the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. Violation of this day, it is stated, so infuriated the local people that they rushed forth in a fury, murdered the servants, stole the bishop's horses, and boasted they would have killed him had he been present.[2]

Whatever the merits of the case may have been, Bishop Bale was in a very dangerous situation. His friend Cooper had taken refuge with him, and they were practically in a state of siege when the Mayor of Kilkenny came to their rescue. He escorted them into Kilkenny under the protection of 300 footmen and 100 horsemen. The bishop's enemies pushed their advantage. It was noised abroad that his servants had been slain by the very hand of God. And, on the day of his memorable rescue by the mayor and his men, a number of priests came to ask him to make a solemn mass for the late King Edward. This he refused to do; and, not many days thereafter, he

[2] Carrigan, W., *History of the Diocese of Ossory*, I, 70.

heard rumors that the priests were plotting his death. So, he retreated to Lechline Castle, and thence to Dublin.

In Dublin, William Williams, Master of the Irish Mint, befriended him and was of material aid to him afterwards.[3] The Archbishop of Dublin, who had showed himself unfriendly to Bale on the latter's first arrival in Ireland, boasted that Bale should not preach in his city. But this did not worry Bishop Bale. After six months in Ireland, he was convinced, as he puts it, that it was pure folly to cast the pearls of the gospel before the Irish swine. He further evened the count with the archbishop by attacking his personal character.

After some days in Dublin, Bale made contact with a young man named Thomas, a native of Essex, who was preparing to depart in a small ship for Scotland. With Thomas he bargained for passage. The bishop was laboring under the illusion that he might presently return from Scotland to his bishopric. But fate had other plans in store for him. While he and Thomas were lingering in the harbor, they were seized by Flemish pirates. One Walter, an Irish rascal, had persuaded the captain of the Flemish ship that Bale was a rich Frenchman, and could pay liberally for his release. Even after the Flemish captain had discovered Bale's identity and had taken over all the valuables on his person, he refused to release him. The captain had a notion that Bale was guilty of treason, and that the English would pay a great reward for his delivery to them.

The Flemish pirate put out in the direction of Cornwall, only to be driven back into the harbor of Waterford by stormy seas. It so chanced that one of the members of the Flemish company was a "Hollander, called Leonard, which knew me in Nortwick." To Leonard, Bale expressed the wish to be in "Duchelande." And now the captain proposed to carry him thither as a passenger. Seeing that all his valuables were in the captain's charge, Bale could not well refuse this proposal. In this manner, he began a most curious adventure.

Two days after Bale had made his compact with the captain, the free-booter was driven into the harbor of St. Ives, Cornwall. The wicked Irishman, Walter, who had been the cause of his seizure at Dublin, now, hoping to gain some reward, hastened on shore to report the bishop as a most heinous traitor. He caused Bale to be examined before a local justice, but, being able to produce no evidence other than that the bishop had been caught taking ship for

[3] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, II, 231.

Scotland, Walter received no reward more than a stern rebuke for his pains. Then, on the following day, which was Sunday, Bale attended services in St. Ives, where he discovered the priest to be a confirmed papist, about whom he picked up and recorded a couple of lewd bar-room stories.

Meantime, while Bishop Bale was on shore, the captain of the ship set sail for the open sea, taking with him all of Bale's money, clothing, and books. But the "costomers' " servant, another Irishman who hoped to defraud Bale of his money, warned him of the captain's purpose. Although the Flemish ship was already two miles out, the Irishman took Bale in his boat and overhauled the ship, but to his disappointment Bale elected to cast his lot with the pirate rather than return to land with an Irishman.

The captain now became very civil to Bale, and returned his money and other possessions to him. The Fleming turned to his business of robbing such ships as he could overhaul. Overtaking an English ship loaded with tin, the Flemings took everything in sight, under the pretext that the goods belonged to France. A second English vessel seized by them contained nothing more valuable than a cargo of apples. All that week the pirates cruised about the Channel seeking prey.

Finally, the pirates put in at Dover Road. Bale and Thomas, who was still with him, wished to go ashore, but the captain would not permit it. He still had ideas of securing a handsome reward for delivering Bale to the English. One Martin, an English pirate who had seen service with Thompson and Strange, but who was now a member of the Fleming's crew, had convinced the captain that Bale had been guilty of putting down the Mass in England, of being the cause of Stephen Gardiner's imprisonment in the Tower, and of poisoning King Edward VI. A man guilty of this array of crimes, it was reasoned, should fetch a goodly reward. The captain and the purser went ashore, taking with them the bishop's seal of Bale, and letters and commendations from Conrad Gesner, Philip Melanchthon, and other European reformers. He must be guilty, they said, of counterfeiting the king's seal, of heresy, and of conspiring against the queen. Although these pirates no doubt would have turned their passenger over to the English for a reward, subsequent events indicate that their real purpose was to extort an exorbitant fee for carrying him across the Channel.

Their first trip ashore brought no success, except that the captain told Bale that he had learned much about him and expected to make

a good profit of it. The next day, two of the company set off in the direction of London, under the pretext of laying the case before the Council. Whereupon, Bale, having no stomach for facing the Council and Stephen Gardiner, struck a bargain with the captain, whereby he was to be safely delivered into Zeeland, in return for which he was to pay fifty pounds in addition to twenty-one pounds which they had taken from his person. Twenty-four days after he first boarded the Flemish ship in Irish waters, Bishop Bale was landed in Zeeland "so full of lyce," he says, "as I coulde swarme." Hence, it is not difficult to understand his distaste for Irishmen and Catholics, each being about equally responsible for his plight.

In Zeeland, Bale was held prisoner in the house of the four owners of the pirate ship, while some method was sought to enable him to pay the promised passage money. As one who had offered the fortune of fifty pounds for his passage over the Channel, he was the object of great curiosity among the local residents. To their further wonderment, a report was spread abroad that he was the great man who had put down the Mass in England and thrown Dr. Gardiner into the Tower. So great did local curiosity become that his keepers found it necessary to hide him and report that he had gone to Antwerp.

Two incidents of his imprisonment, Bale considered little short of miraculous. A cruel monk of the town, an inquisitor of heretics, the next day after Bale's arrival there, fell sick and was bedridden the whole time of the prisoner's detention. Bale calls this a most wonderful "wurke of God!" Equally by God's persuasion, he won the host and his wife to be his friends in his negotiations for his ransom. Finally, through the intercession of his host, he was released on the payment of thirty pounds.

Bale had been detained three weeks in these bickerings about his ransom. Moreover, he had been aboard the pirate ship for three weeks and three days. His departure from Ireland could not have been earlier than the middle of September, 1553. The last exact date given by Bale himself is September 8, the date of the slaying of his servants at Holmes Court. After this event, he remained some days in Kilkenny. Then, he went to Dublin, where he also remained "certen dayes." If we count from September 8, 1553, we find that Bale's release would be about October 28, 1553. However, the "certen dayes" he spent at Kilkenny and Dublin shows that he could not have been released earlier than in the first half of November, 1553.

Chapter 8

SECOND EXILE IN GERMANY

Thus hathe my Lorde Gode most miraculously delivered me from all those dangerous perils, and from the gready mouths of devouring lions, into the worthy lande of Germanye yet ones againe. (*Vocacyon*, p. 358.)

It was with a sigh of relief that the harassed Bale once more found himself an exile. He accepted his fate philosophically. As Bishop of Ossory, he had felt himself "in the peceable possession of the pleasant Euphrates," but now he recognized, he says, that God "hath prouyded me . . . to taste of a farre other cuppe."[1] In this manner, John Bale, now fifty-eight years of age and practically penniless, went into exile for the second time in his life. One of his first acts, after his release in November, 1553, was to write an account of his experiences as Bishop of Ossory. This account, dated in December, 1553, bears the inscription, "Rome before the castell of S. Angell."[2]

Bale has likewise been credited with the translation of Stephen Gardiner's *De vera Obedientia*. The translation appeared in London late in 1553, and was calculated to embarrass Gardiner, who was now Lord Chancellor in Queen Mary's new government. The *De vera Obedientia* was a work which Gardiner had published in 1535, defending the course of Henry VIII in his quarrel with the Roman Pope. Another edition of the book had been published at Hamburg, in 1536, with an Introduction by Edmund Bonner, who was now (1553) Bishop of London, and a great enemy of the reformers. This latter edition was the one allegedly translated by Bale, thus exposing, so Protestants thought, a hypocritical inconsistency in the policy of the two famous orthodox leaders.

The translation of Gardiner's book was in circulation in London late in 1553, the first edition bearing the date of October 26, from "Roane."[3] This was followed by a reprint from the same place. In November, 1553, another edition appeared, bearing on the title-page the inscription, "in Rome before the Castle of St. Angel at the sign of St. Peter," which was the same inscription previously noted on the title-page of Bale's *Vocacyon*. The name of Michael Wood

[1] Bale, J., *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, 359.
[2] *Short Title Catalogue*, 31.
[3] *The Chronicle of Queen Jane*, Camden Society, Vol. 48, p. 33.

appears as the translator. "The translator," says the historian Gairdner, "who disguised himself by the name of 'Michael Wood,' was really the notorious foulmouthed Bale."[4]

This translation was in circulation in London around Christmas time, in 1553. A contemporary chronicle states:

> About Christmas eve ther came forth a booke entytled "De vera obedientia," imprinted, as yt is saide, at Roane, where it was translated, an oracion made by the byshop of Winchester, &c. with the preface by Bonner, byshop of London.[5]

The book was actually printed by the London printer, Hugh Singleton, who also published Bale's *Vocacyon*. The date on the title-page is probably false. The so-called "Roane" edition was dated October 26, and Bale was in the hands of the Flemish pirates at the time. The supposition of the pirates that Bale had had something to do with the imprisonment of Bishop Gardiner in the Tower may have come from this translation, which Bale perhaps had in his possession at the time. In fact, under the circumstances it is somewhat difficult to understand how he could have translated the book then. For it will be recalled that the Flemish pirates did not release him until some time in November, 1553.

Although the *De vera Obedientia* was actually not particularly inconsistent with Gardiner's policy in 1553, his enemies made a great point of it. The work was well known to Protestants of the period. It had been brought up against Gardiner in 1551, in the deposition of one John Potinger, who remembered that "the said bishop had set forth a book in Latin, many years since, entitled 'De Vera Obedientia,' wherein the said bishop set forth the king's supremacy, as he remembered; and treated against the usurped power of the bishop of Rome, and of obedience of the subjects to their prince, as supreme head, very earnestly, to this deponent's remembrance."[6] Consequently, it offered Bale an opportunity to even the score with Gardiner, who had previously tried to bring him into difficulties.

Bale's immediate movements after his release by the Flemish pirates in November, 1553, are not easily determined. The return of the Catholic party to power in England saw a great exodus of Protestants from the country. They found refuge mostly in the friendly cities of Germany and Switzerland. John Foxe, himself an

[4] Gairdner, J., *Lollardy and the Reformation*, IV, 72.
[5] *Chronicle of Queen Jane*, 33. [6] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, VI, 217–18.

exile, estimated that at least eight hundred Protestants found refuge abroad during the reign of Queen Mary.[7] Bale, also, has recorded a considerable list of these exiles.[8]

Theodore Vetter has assumed that Bale went first to Basle, where he may have met the noted German controversialist, Thomas Kirchmayer (Naogeorgus), who at the time was lingering in the Swiss city to escape persecution.[9] This assumption is based on Bale's statement in his *Declaration of Edmonde Bonner's Articles:* "Wrytten from Basilie in Heluetia. An. 1554." It seems more probable that he went directly to Frankfort, where we find him in 1554. His residence in Frankfort may be traced in a few letters and in a work, written by a contemporary, entitled *A Brief Discourse of the Troubles of Frankfort 1554–1558 A.D.* The quarrel in the English congregation at Frankfort is a classic, but the present account must be limited to that part of it which immediately concerns John Bale.

On June 27, 1554, a party of English exiles arrived in the city of Frankfort.[10] In the party were Edmund Sutton, William Whittingham (thought to be the author of the book mentioned above), and Bale's close friends, William Williams and Thomas Wood.[11] The Frankfort authorities granted the English the right to a church of their own. Since this privilege was rare among the settlements of exiles, the English of Frankfort sent letters to other groups of English Protestants, inviting them to Frankfort and suggesting a certain procedure for carrying on worship. The English at Strassburg replied, indicating that they would be pleased to have as their leader either "Doctor Poynet, Master Scory, Dr. Bale, or Dr. Cox."[12] This is the first time that Bale's presence in Frankfort is noted. In a letter of September 24, 1554, signed by Bale and others, the Frankfort Church sent a call to John Knox to be their minister.[13] Knox accepted the call. Meanwhile, the Frankfort congregation had grown to be one of the largest Protestant groups on the continent, numbering among its members some of the most noted of the Protestant leaders. The authorities at Frankfort were more than considerate to their visitors. In short, the project gave every indication of becoming a veritable English Protestant Utopia. But, alas, human nature proved as incapable of Utopia in Frankfort as in other places in the world.

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[7] *Ibid.*, 430. [8] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 741 ff.
[9] Vetter, T., *Englische Flüchtlinge*, 19. [10] *Troubles of Frankfort* (1908), 26.
[11] *Ibid.* [12] *Ibid.*, 31. [13] *Ibid.*, 36.

From the time of his desertion of the Carmelite Friars to become a married priest, an evil genius had forever been at John Bale's side. Everywhere it had been the same story. The bishops had hounded him; he had been driven from his vicarage at Thorndon; in 1540 he had been forced to flee from England; at Bishopstoke his life had been made miserable by his enemies; and, in Ireland he had escaped being murdered by a very narrow margin. At Frankfort, he was among friends, safe from the papists, but he soon found himself in the midst of a violent factional dispute, which threatened to disrupt the whole settlement.

In brief, the Frankfort congregation split into two sections, one headed by Dr. Cox, former tutor of Edward VI, and the other by the great Protestant leader, John Knox. The party of Dr. Cox favored the form of services used in England during the reign of Edward VI; Knox and his followers wanted a more radical form. Bale took a prominent part on the side of Dr. Cox, the more moderate of the two groups, for, despite all his rantings, as pointed out by Bancroft at the end of the sixteenth century,[14] he tended away from the extreme Puritanism of the more radical of the English Protestants. On April 5, 1555, the leaders of the Cox party dispatched a letter to John Calvin, at Geneva, requesting his intervention in their behalf.[15] The signers of this letter were Bale, Cox, David Whitehead, Richard Alvey, Thomas Becon, Edwin Sandys, Edmund Grindal, Robert Horn, Thomas Lever, and Thomas Sampson. Shortly, this party charged before the magistrates of Frankfort that John Knox was guilty of high treason against Emperor Charles V, his son Philip, King of Spain, and, curiously enough, against the Queen of England. Much as they hated Queen Mary, who was responsible for their unhappy plight, they apparently hated the opposition in their own party worse. John Knox placed the responsibility for this move on the shoulders of Dr. Cox, John Bale, Richard Turner, and Jewel of Oxford.[16] Knox retreated from Frankfort. A meeting of the opposing factions was held, August 30, 1555, and "not many days after, the oppressed Church departed from Frankfort to Basle and Geneva."[17]

Among the Frankfort exiles were John Foxe, John Makebraie, William Williams, Thomas Wood, John Wood, and Mr. Thomas Ashley, all of whom were friends of Bale. Foxe had fled from England, in 1554, to Nieuport in Flanders, thence to Antwerp and

[14] Bancroft, R., *Dangerous Positions*, 39. [15] *Parker Society: Original Letters*, II, 757.
[16] *Troubles of Frankfort*, 67. [17] *Ibid.*, 85.

Strassburg, and finally to Frankfort.[18] He joined the Knox faction in the quarrel. Although Bale belonged to the other party, this fact apparently did not interfere with the friendship between him and Foxe. John Makebraie (or Mackbray) was a Scotchman of whom Bale says, "*quando quidem fuit per aliquot annos mihi familiariter notus . . .* "[19] William Williams, who had assisted Bale in Ireland, appears to have continued his good offices during the exile. Bale dedicated one of the books of his *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus* to this friend, with high praise for his friendship.[20] Mr. Ashley was an English gentleman and a friend of Bale. Writing to Ashley late in 1555, Bale took occasion to lament the attitude of the English purists at Frankfort, whom he accused of "fierce despisings and cursed speakings."[21]

In the summer of 1555, Sir Thomas Hoby, on a tour of the continent, visited the city of Frankfort.[22] In a record of his journey, Sir Thomas mentions that in Frankfort he saw John Bale, John Hales, Mr. Thomas Ashley, Mr. J. Cope, Mr. Sutton, Mr. Whitehead, Turner of Windsor, "and dyuers other men and women to the number of one hundrethe, whiche had there a churche graunted them to preache in."[23]

As previously indicated, a few days after the meeting of the disputing factions, on August 30, 1555, a number of the English departed from the city to go to Basle and Geneva. Among them was John Foxe, who was perhaps accompanied by Bale. For both Bale and Foxe were soon in Basle, where they took residence in the house of Oporinus, the printer.[24] Foxe found employment as a reader in the printing establishment of Oporinus.[25] In return for his services, he received "bread, water, and shelter."[26] Bale may have done similar work for Oporinus.

Edmund Grindal, who was living in Strassburg, corresponded with Foxe, and he sent friendly greetings to Bale, in letters dated May 10, 1556, August 1, 1556, and June 18, 1557.[27] Bale had also kept in touch with friends in England, who kept him informed of the progress of events there.[28]

Bale likewise had many friends among the continental reformers, some of whom he had known for years. Of these men, he appears to

[18] Townsend, G., *Life of John Foxe*, 14 ff. [19] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, II, 229.
[20] *Ibid.*, II, 231. [21] Strype, J., *Ecclesiastical Mem., Orig. Rec.* (1731), III, 107–09.
[22] *The Travels and Life of Sir Thomas Hoby, Kt.*, 123. [23] *Ibid.*
[24] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 733. [25] Townsend, G., *op. cit.*, 26. [26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Works of Grindal*, Parker Society, 221, 224, 228. [28] Strype, J., *op. cit.*, II, 484.

have known best Conrad Gesner, Henry Bullinger, John Junius, and Josias Simler. His acquaintanceship with Gesner dates from an earlier period. Bullinger, who lived in Zurich, had been Bale's host and his patron.[29] John Junius, Bale calls "my faithfull companion."[30] Josias Simler, of Zurich, he calls "my singular friend."[31] Although Bale evidently spent most of this period in the city of Basle, he appears, also, to have visited Zurich and possibly other Swiss cities. To Basle, its senate, ministers, and people, he gave the highest praise for the provisions made and kindness shown to the English exiles. He also gave unstinted praise to the people of Wittenberg and Geneva.[32]

Meanwhile, Bale and Foxe were actively engaged in bookmaking. Since the publication of his first catalogue of writers in 1548, Bale, despite the waste of his time and energies in controversies, had worked steadily in the preparation of a greatly enlarged edition of that work. In England, as previously indicated, he had visited libraries, printers, and authors to secure first-hand information. Even during his short and stormy career in Ireland, he had found time to continue his work, and his note-book was apparently one of the few personal articles that he carried with him on his tempestuous flight from that country. Having the heart of a true antiquarian, he had spent both his surplus time and his money in making his collections. This catalogue was published by John Oporinus, at Basle, in 1557 and 1559, in two parts.

While Bale and the Protestants were thus managing to exist abroad, some of their friends at home were not faring so well. The bloody Marian persecution was under way. Bale's old friend John Philpot, archdeacon of Winchester under John Ponet, was martyred.[33] His friend Nicholas Grimald, the poet, escaped a similar fate, it is said, by betraying some of his own friends to the authorities.[34] Obviously, Bale knew nothing of this matter when he wrote Grimald's biography for his own catalogue of writers.[35]

Queen Mary died, November 17, 1558. Elizabeth Tudor mounted the English throne, and a weary but happy procession of religious exiles turned homeward, confident that God had delivered them once again into that blessed land of Canaan. John Foxe went home

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[29] Bale, J., *Pageant of the Popes*, "Introduction." [30] *Ibid.* [31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.* [33] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, VII, 605 ff. Cf. *D.N.B.*, XV, 112.
[34] Merrill, L. R., *Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, 36 ff.
[35] Bale J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 701.

from Basle to put the finishing touches to his monumental history of the Protestant martyrs. John Knox turned back to Scotland to begin his epoch-making reformation of that land. William Barlow returned to become bishop of Bath and Wells; Miles Coverdale to the bishopric of Exeter; John Scory to the bishopric of Chichester; Edmund Grindal to the bishopric of London; Edwin Sandys to the bishopric of Worcester; and many others to fill places of more or less importance in the new order in England.

Chapter 9

LAST YEARS AND DEATH

Among these homing pilgrims was John Bale, now an old man, worn out by twenty-five years of bitter struggle. For several years he had been subject to an illness which left him little strength to return to his bishopric of Ossory to renew the battle with the Irish. He wished to settle down to the quiet pursuit of his antiquarian labors, having in mind the writing of a history of England. To this end, he began an unsuccessful effort to recover a great collection of books and manuscripts which he had carried over to Ireland but had been forced to abandon on his flight from that country.

About this same year (1559), Queen Elizabeth sent a letter to Warham and Robert Saint Leger, in Ireland, requesting them to send over the "books and writings" of John Bale, "late Bishop of Ossory."[1] The queen's message further describes Bale as "a man that hath byn studious in the serche for the history and antiquities of this our realme."[2] These books and writings, so the letter states, were to be used "for the illustration and setting forth of the storye of this our realme by him, the said Bale."[3] This request brought excuses, but no manuscripts or books, and, as will be pointed out presently, Bale continued his efforts to retrieve this lost library.

Queen Elizabeth honored Bale by appointing him, along with Barlow, Scory, Coverdale, and others, to install Matthew Parker into the Archbishopric of Canterbury, December 6, 1559.[4] However, for some unascertainable reason Bale was unable to be present at that ceremony. Bale himself was nominated to a prebendary at Canterbury, January 1, 1559–60.[5] This was but small reward for one who had spent his best energies and exposed himself as had Bale for the cause of the new order in religion. Some indication that he was aware of this fact appears in his letter to Parker, July 30, 1560, when he says: "And how I have been rewarded of my contraye for my paynes, the Lorde wele knoweth."[6] He was, however, of a quarrelsome disposition, as the events of his career show, and, perhaps by this time he was too far gone in years to accept the duties of a more responsible position. Nevertheless, he still had the desire to create some useful work. At Canterbury, he turned once again to the

[1] *Calendar of State Papers for Ireland*, I, 158. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*
[4] Rymer, T., *Foedera*, XV, 549. [5] *Ibid.*, XV, 563. [6] *Camb. Antq. Soc.*, III, 157.

matter of producing an English history more in keeping with the spirit of the new age—an undertaking he some years before had proclaimed necessary, and which had had some influence in the work of Edward Hall.[7]

To this end, Bale needed to regain possession of the great mass of material which he had left behind him in Ireland on his hasty departure in 1553. The queen's letter, quoted above, failed to produce results; so Bale, in a letter of July 30, 1560, appealed to Archbishop Parker.[8] He desired the return of his books and manuscripts, he told Parker, "for perfourmance of an Englysh chronycle, which I haue begonne and not fynyshed."[9] Parker, who was also working in that same field, had requested Bale to supply him with certain information. Among other matters, Bale gave Parker an ancient manuscript in favor of the marriage of priests, which the archbishop seems to have used in the composition of his book in *Vindication of Priests Marriages*.[10] Parker gave the manuscript to Foxe, who inserted it in Volume VIII of his *Acts and Monuments*.[11]

In the meantime, Bale was still strong enough to continue registering his dislike of the papists. In the Cathedral Church at Canterbury hung the Arms and Cardinal's Hat of the late Reginald Pole. Bale and one Goodrich formally protested against this as neither "decent nor tolerable, but abominable, and not to be suffered."[12] Bale is thought, also, to have revived his play of *King John* for performance on Queen Elizabeth's visit to Ipswich, August 5–11, 1561. This was perhaps Elizabeth's first view of a play involving historical personages, a type which reached its peak during her reign.

John Bale's plans for writing a history of England were never realized. He died at Canterbury, in November, 1563, and was buried in the Cathedral Church there.[13] His contemporary, the indefatigable writer of eclogues, epitaphs, and sonnets, Barnaby Googe, has left an appropriate epitaph of Bale:

> Good aged Bale, that with thy hoary heares
> Dost yet persyste to turne the paynefull Booke,
> O happye man! that hast obtaynde suche yeares,
> And leavst not yet on papers pale to looke;
> Gyue ouer now to beat thy weryed braine,
> And rest thy pen that long hath laboured sore.

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[7] See p. 116. [8] *Camb. Antq. Soc., op. cit.* [9] *Ibid.*
[10] Strype, J., *Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 74. [11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*, 74. [13] Christmas, H., *Select Works of J. Bale*, xi.

For aged men unfyt, sure, is suche paine,
And the(e) beseems to laboure now no more;
But thou, I thynke, Don Platoes part will playe,
With Booke in hand to haue thy dying day.[14]

[14] After the death of Bale, Parker secured his collections. Writing to Secretary Cecil, in 1563, Parker said of this collection that "he was promised to have them for money." (B. M. Lansdowne MS, Pt. I, no. 6, Art. 81). Bale's continental friend, Flacius Illyricus, also sent over to secure some of Bale's papers for use in one of his own compositions. (Strype J., *op. cit.*, Bk. II, App., p. 31).

PART II

BALE'S CONTRIBUTION TO ENGLISH DRAMA

Chapter 10

RELATION TO TRANSITION DRAMA

The age in which John Bale lived (1495–1563) marks in a very general way the transition between the religious drama of the Middle Ages and the regular drama of the great age of Elizabeth. In the field of dramatic literature, this transition period produced no giants. From some points of view, however, it is very helpful to know something about those dreary and dull fellows who prepare the way and make it possible for giants to thrive in the land. English drama of the transition period never startles the reader with any great masterpieces; it is, however, stimulating in that new elements are continually being introduced into it to remind one that better things await him at the end of the trail.

When John Bale went up to Cambridge in 1514, the religious drama was still with very few exceptions the chief element in the dramatic entertainment of the populace. Both the miracle and the morality plays flourished, and their performances must have been a common sight to Friar Bale; for, despite several elements not found in the older plays—elements which point to the future—his own plays, as might be expected, are basically morality and miracle dramas. He is bound by strong ties to the Middle Ages, and is unusual only in his efforts to free himself from these traditional bonds.

At Cambridge, Bale came into contact with plays of another type. His friend Robert Barnes introduced the reading of the plays of Plautus and Terence into the house of the Augustine Friars at Cambridge.[1] Stephen Gardiner, to whom at a later date plays were to become a great source of annoyance, played a part on one occasion in Plautus's comedy of *Miles Gloriosus*.[2] Such productions were not uncommon at Cambridge during Bale's residence there. In 1516–17, a play of Terence was presented at King's Hall, by the students of Mr. Thorpe, the vice-master of the college.[3] In 1522–23,

[1] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 415.
[2] Muller, J. A., *Stephen Gardiner*, 1.
[3] Smith, G. C. M., *College Plays*, 3, 4.

a "comedia Plauti" was acted at Queen's College.[4] Under such circumstances, Bale must have had opportunity at least to observe a type of drama different from the native religious plays. There is also a possibility that he came into contact with yet another type of play—a type more closely related to the kind he himself was later to produce.

For between 1520 and 1532, two plays of a fellow student, Thomas Arthur, were acted at Cambridge. These two plays, entitled *Microcosmos* and *Mundus Plumbeus*, "to judge by their titles," says Professor Moore Smith, "partook of the character of Moralities."[5] Boas suggests that the plays were allegorical or symbolical.[6] Thomas Arthur was a radical Protestant, a convert of Bilney, with whom he was summoned in 1527 to appear before Wolsey to answer to the charge of heresy.[7] Both recanted. Bilney was burned at the stake in 1531. Arthur died in 1532.[8] Although the two plays of Thomas Arthur are no longer extant, one may suspect, for reasons pointed out above, that they were moralities of a controversial cast. One would like to feel that Bale knew of these plays and perhaps saw them acted at Cambridge when he was a student there. While it is true that Bale's own books are the only source of information on the writing of Arthur, yet, in his *notebook*, he gives as the source of his information concerning Arthur's works, *Ex relatione magistri Thome Picte*.[9] This would not necessarily mean, however, that Bale had not known about Arthur's work at an earlier period. Moreover, if Bale had any model, it was someone of Thomas Arthur's type.

Of some importance, too, in the background of what Bale was to do in the field of drama was the dialogue. In this connection, the name of John Wyclif stands first in order. Bale turned to the great fourteenth-century theologian as the spiritual father of the Reformation in England. His introduction to Wyclif came early in his career as a member of the Carmelite Order, through the study of the works of Thomas Walden.[10] A prominent member of the Carmelite Order, Thomas Walden was a leading opponent of Wyclif. Bale was a zealous preserver of Wyclif's works, and he prepared an extensive list of them for his own catalogues. Wyclif, he characterized as "the very organ of God, and vessel of the Holy Ghost."[11]

[4] *Ibid.*, 50. [5] *Ibid.*, 4. [6] Boas, F., *University Drama*, 12.
[7] Muller, J. A., *op. cit.*, 18. [8] *Ibid.*, 342.
[9] Bale, J., *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, 429.
[10] *Idem*, *Alphabetical index to Walden's Fasciculus Zizaniorum Wiclevi*, MS. Bodl. Mus. 163.
[11] *Idem*, *Examinacyon of Anne Askewe*, 171.

Of particular interest in connection with the plays of Bale is the *Dialogus* of Wyclif.[12] It consists of a discussion between Veritas and Mendacium. Mendacium defends the Roman Church and all its baggage; Veritas supports the idea of reform in the constitution of the church, in the begging orders, and in the doctrine of the Eucharist. Both the dialogue and the doctrine of Wyclif may have had important bearing on the development of Bale as a dramatist.

In the background of the drama which we approach now, we ought also to note some further points concerning the dialogue, and especially its use in the struggle to reform the church. Literature of this type favorable to Protestantism flourished in Germany at an earlier date than in England. Among the Germans, the *dialogue* was early turned to controversial uses. Erasmus, who was teaching Greek at Cambridge about the time that Bale entered Jesus College in 1514, used the dialogue effectively to satirize the evils of the church. And the Roman Church may thank Erasmus, no doubt, for popularizing a practice which led to serious consequences when it was adopted by others. The famous Dutchman, however, never ventured outside the church itself, always remaining a good Catholic. The Germans, on the other hand, accepted a new doctrine, and proceeded to bombard the church from without.[13] The German Ulrich von Hutten "founded the literature of personal invective in which the reformation was so profuse."[14] In so doing he used a form of the dialogue. This is admirably illustrated in his *Die Anschauenden* (1518), in which we find the two leading characters, Sol and Phaeton, looking down upon the imperial diet at Augsburg. Their attention is attracted to the rich procession of Cardinal Gaetani, who has been sent by the Pope to extort money from the Germans. Sol and Phaeton discuss, in terms not very complimentary to the papacy, the abuses of the Roman Church.

A whole school of scandalous satirical literature developed around the subject of the Mass. This Mass literature, which appears to have originated among the Protestant Germans, filtered over into England, and forms one of the common bonds between English and German literature of that time. Outstanding among the Germans of this school is Nicholas Manuel, of Berne, Switzerland. Manuel's *Krankheit der Messe* (1538) is one of the prominent dramatic efforts

[12] Pollard, A. W., *Iohannis Wycliffe Dialogus* (1886).
[13] Robertson, J. G., *History of German Literature* (1902), 183.
[14] Herford, C. H., *Literary Relations*, 25.

of this type, and one of far-reaching influence among Protestant writers of the time. William Turner, an Englishman who was in exile at the time for the sake of his religious views, wrote the *Examination of the Mass*. In the same spirit was William Roy's *Burying of the Mass*, proscribed in 1531.[15] Another work, *The resurreccion of the masse*, has sometimes been attributed to Bale.[16] In his catalogues, Bale lists two works of his own composition on the Mass. The Mass is also a common source of attack in Bale's plays. That the polemical literature on this subject was prevalent in England at a relatively early date is testified by Bishop Bonner's list of "Prohibited Books, A.D. 1542."[17] One of the works in this list is entitled *The burying of the masse in Englishe in Ryme*. The lists of prohibited books for the second quarter of the sixteenth century attest the presence of the works of the German reformers in England. These same lists also indicate that the *dialogue* was used by English polemical writers of the age. A good example of this is the dialogue entitled *A Proper Dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a husbandman eche Complaynynge to other their miserable calamite through the ambicion of the clergye*.[18] Written about 1530, this dialogue was banned by Bishop Bonner in 1542.

In drama of a more detailed type than the dialogue, changes were going on. John Skelton gave to the morality play the sharp weapon of individualized satire.[19] Of the various forms of polemical and moralizing literature which filtered into England from Germany, the most interesting is the Christian-Terence drama. The Germans and the Dutch learned early that the Latin-comedy formula could be used as a framework upon which to write plays with a proper moral lesson, and even for Protestant polemical purposes. The English appear to have adopted this idea from the Dutch and Germans. Hence, the gap was gradually closed between the morality and the regular drama.

Bale's part in closing this gap, although not great, yet has its significance. He was, perhaps, the first to use the term *act* for the divisions of his plays.[20] His are the earliest extant English plays

[15] Germann, F., *Luke Shepherd* (1911), 11. [16] *Ibid.*

[17] Reprinted in Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, V, App. X. [18] Arber, E., *English Reprints*.

[19] Although he strongly resembles Skelton in many respects, there is no evidence that Bale had even heard of Skelton at the time he wrote his plays. In the 1548 catalogue, Skelton gets scant mention. In the later catalogues he is mentioned more at length, but the *incipits* are missing after his titles, indicating that Bale had not seen the works themselves.

[20] Some care must be taken on this point. His plays, although written in the 1530's, were not printed until c. 1547. The single play coming down in manuscript—*King John*—dates

written exclusively for controversial purposes. And he was far ahead of his age in grasping the possibilities of historical narrative as material for the stage. In these matters, John Bale must be given credit for what he actually achieved. Before going further into this discussion, however, we should note first what Bale had in common with his contemporaries (his transitional qualities), and what he carried over from the past.

In common with his contemporaries, beginning in the 1530's, Bale calls his plays "comedies" and "tragedies."[21] He, also, uses the term "interlude" in the title of his plays,—an older name, but transitional.[22] But, inasmuch as Bale labels John Skelton's morality *Magnificence* as a tragedy, it is perhaps just as well not to take his terminology too seriously. Certain characteristics of Bale's ragged versification possibly also mark him as a transition dramatist.[23] And here again his reach appears to have exceeded his grasp. Structurally Bale's plays likewise show the indifference common to his contemporaries. The influence of classical models may also be ob-

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from the early years of Elizabeth. Consequently, we have no way of knowing for certain whether or not Bale originally divided his plays into acts.

[21] Boas, F., *University Drama*, 11–12.

[22] The term "interlude," as used by Bale, covers both comedy and tragedy, See *A new comedy or Enterlude, concerning the three lawes, etc.*, and *A Tragedye or enterlude manyfestyng the chefe promyses of God, etc.* Whether or not he made any real distinction between comedy and tragedy is a somewhat doubtful matter. E. E. Jones, who edited the tragedy of *God's Promises* in 1909, surmised that Bale made no clear distinction in the terms comedy and tragedy. Comedy, according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, was then a term applied to mystery-plays or interludes with a prosperous ending, and Bale's *Temptation* is cited as an example of this type. According to the same source, a tragedy was a "play or other literary work of a serious or sorrowful character, with a fatal or disastrous conclusion," and in illustration of this definition, this authority cites line 1465 of Bale's *Three Laws:* "Companyons I want, to begynne thys tragedye." This is the speech of Infidelitas, who is about to corrupt the Law of Christ; hence, the tragedy lies in the corruption of the Law of Christ. Thus, Bale, apparently understood tragedy and comedy as those terms are defined above. Of his five extant plays, only *God's Promises* is called a tragedy. Whether that play ends happily or otherwise is probably a matter of personal opinion.

[23] "One single play, and a very remarkable one, would suffice to show the difficulty of characterising with any exactness this doggrel play-metre. I refer to Bale's *King Johan*, the undeniable point of junction between the Interlude and the Chronicle-play, and almost that between the Morality and the Modern Drama generally. There is no doubt that, on the principles of Procrustes, and without perhaps pushing those principles to extremity, the norm of the metre is Alexandrine. By no very violent compression or extension you can always get the twelve syllables, and generally that caesura with which, in English, the continuous Alexandrine seems to find it nearly as hard to dispense as in French. But an Alexandrine that runs easily and *cleverly*—that dispenses not merely with jamming and tugging, but with unnatural slurs and unnatural emphasis—is even rarer than a decasyllable of the same conditions in Lydgate or Barclay . . . What is really curious, and what shows that the Alexandrine was sounding in the man's ear, though he could not get it to run fluently from his tongue or pen, is that, with all his hobbling and stumbling, he scarcely ever slips into a real and unmistakable fourteener." See Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody*, I, 336–37.

served in Bale.[24] These characteristics of the plays of Bale indicate that, although his plays must be listed as moralities or miracles, he was a transitional dramatist, one who contributed to bridging the gap between the old and the new.

What good qualities Bale may have had as a dramatist are generally lost sight of by the modern student of the period, because the principal purpose of the plays is controversial. This phase of the subject is certainly somewhat distasteful, but even here one may gather rather cold comfort from the fact that Bale was a dramatic innovator, an adaptor who aroused a school of controversial drama into being. He is, judging from extant works, the first dramatist to represent God as a religious partisan. In the *Three Laws of Nature, Moses, and Christ*, the first extant controversial play in English, Bale offered a drama which he later described as "suche a comedie as myghtely rebuked the abomynacyons and fowle fylthie occupienges of the bishopp of Rome."[25] His attack is aimed at those practices, superstitious and immoral, which were the butt of the opposition to Rome by the party of the New Learning. The main tenets of his faith may be found in the forms advocated by the party of Thomas Cromwell.[26] This framework of legislation for religious procedure likewise is the framework of Bale's play of *Three Laws*. Moreover, Bale's attacks on the monastic institutions, distasteful as they are, seem relatively mild when compared to the reports of the visitations which were begun in 1535. Thus, it is not hard to understand why the king's chief minister of state, Cromwell, found Bale's plays to his taste.

In *King John*, Bale continued his attacks on the Roman Church.[27] The play was meant to drive home the lesson carried away from a performance at Archbishop Cranmer's house, in 1539, by John Alforde, who reported that it would be a pity "that the Bisshop of

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[24] "This indifference to structure becomes apparent when we examine the time-schemes in plays in which the influence of classical models can be traced, either directly, or through the intermediary of the Italian or German neo-classical drama. Bale's *King Johan* (c. 1539) consists of two parts, separated by an elastic interval; the second part might be comprised in one day, but within the first a journey from England to Rome on the part of Dissimulation and his friends must occur." See Buland, M., *Presentation of Time in the Elizabethan Drama*, 32.

[25] Bale, J., *A franticke papyst of Hamshyre*, Camd. Soc., Vol. 77, 315 ff.

[26] "The Bible and the three Creeds were laid down as the sole grounds of faith . . . The assertion of the doctrines of Transubstantiation and Confession was compensated by the acknowledgment of Justification by Faith . . . condemnation of purgatory, or pardons, and of masses for the dead . . . Pilgrimages were suppressed . . . excessive number of holidays diminished . . . worship of images and relics discouraged . . . Bible was formally adopted as the basis of English faith . . ." See Green, *Short History of the English People*, I, 320.

[27] For the historical elements in this play, see pp. 95 ff.

Rome should reigne any lenger, for if he should, the said Bisshop wold do with our King as he did with King John."[28] The three remaining plays of Bale are much less controversial than the two considered above. In *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation*, Bale makes the point that salvation comes through *faith* alone, whereas the notion of free will, good works, and good intentions, leads only to damnation. All these plays have retained the essential quality of the morality, namely, the struggle between good and evil for the soul of man, or an equivalent virtue. But now the virtues are Protestants; the vices are Catholics. The virtues always win the struggle.

In conclusion, it may be observed that, as the contemporary makers of popular interludes, Bale constructed or revised his plays for presentation by a troupe of professional actors.[29] The structure of his plays, consequently, had to be somewhat different from that of the miracle and morality *genre*.[30] Hence, his dramatic pieces are short enough to have been acted within a reasonable length of time; and the number of parts are either limited or arranged so that a small group of players could handle them without inconvenience.

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[28] Parker Society, Vol. 19, 388.
[29] For Bale's experience as a professional, see pp. 101 ff.
[30] Chambers, E. K., *Mediaeval Stage*, II, 188.

Chapter 11

DATES OF BALE'S PLAYS

In recent years the plays of John Bale have been given considerable miscellaneous attention. Although the general period of the composition of these dramas has been loosely fixed around 1538, nothing very definite has been done to establish their chronology with any exactness. An excellent beginning, however, in that direction was made by Mr. J. H. P. Pafford in his edition of *King John* (Malone Society, 1931). Mr. Pafford pointed out the fact that both the extant plays of *King John* and the *Three Laws* were listed in the *Anglorum Heliades*, a manuscript composed by John Bale in 1536, and, consequently, that both the plays must have been written prior to the date of that manuscript. My purpose here is to continue the discussion from where Mr. Pafford left it, and to point out various circumstances which may help to clarify further the chronology of Bale's early dramatic productions.

John Bale, in the year of 1534, was called before Edward Lee, Archbishop of York, and examined upon the articles of honoring and praying to saints.[1] As far as the records show, this was the one and only occasion upon which Bale was called before Archbishop Lee. In his autobiography, Bale states that he was haled before Lee and afterwards before Stokesley, Bishop of London, but that each time Thomas Cromwell saved him *ob editas comedias*.[2] The reference in Bale's biographical sketch to his arraignment before Lee was, apparently, the incident of the year of 1534, which he describes in his *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe*. Hence, he had already composed certain comedies by 1534.

The three autobiographical sketches which Bale has left us, (dating 1536, 1548, and 1557), show the great care taken by him to preserve a list of all his numerous writings. Hence, any *comedies* of his making in 1534—especially, such as persons in high places may have found pleasing—would be preserved in the author's list of his works in 1536. It is likely, therefore, that part, perhaps all, of the plays listed by Bale under his name in the *Anglorum Heliades* of 1536 had already been written by 1534. Other circumstances tend to support this assumption.

[1] Bale, J., *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe*, 86.
[2] *Idem*, *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 702.

Bale's heading to the catalogue of fourteen plays in the *Anglorum Heliades* (1536) states that he composed them especially for Master John Vere, the Earl of Oxford. Apparently the statement is inclusive and means that all fourteen of the plays were written for the Earl of Oxford. In that case, *King John* and the *Three Laws*, which are in the list, were probably extant in 1534; for, as noted above, the plays written by 1534 are likely to have been recorded among the works of Bale in *Anglorum Heliades*. One of the plays in the list likewise points to c. 1534 as the probable date of composition. This play is entitled *About the King's Two Marriages*. A play on this subject, written as a part of the controversy concerning the divorce of the king from Queen Catherine and his marriage to Anne Boleyn, would necessarily have been composed after the marriage to Anne Boleyn in 1533 and before the death of Queen Catherine, on January 8, 1536. A partisan defense of the marriage to Anne Boleyn logically should fall in the period of 1534, for it is recorded that after that date the king ardently wished for a second separation and a third marriage.[3] This circumstance falls into the general scheme of things noted above, pointing clearly to 1533–34 as the probable time of composition of the group of plays recorded by Bale in his 1536 list. Furthermore, as indicated above, this list of plays was written for the Earl of Oxford. The Earl of Oxford was the first Protestant of his line, and subservient to the king's wishes in the matter of the divorce from Queen Catherine. In various ways he made himself useful to the cause of Anne Boleyn. In fact, the Earl of Oxford's greatest period of activity in behalf of the new system was at the time of the divorce and during the period when the influence of Anne was still dominant at the court. For some reason, the influence of Oxford seems to have passed along with that of Anne. As pointed out, this influence came to an end by 1534. Hence, the logical time for the Earl of Oxford to have required a series of Protestant plays, and especially a play on the two marriages of the king, was during the period of his activity in behalf of Anne Boleyn—not after he had practically retired from taking an active part in the affairs of state. Like the other circumstances mentioned previously, this points to 1533–34 as the probable date of the composition of the plays of Bale.

There is, also, some slight indication that Bale had begun to write plays as early as 1531, and that his *Three Laws* may date from that year. In 1535, during an investigation into the activities of the

[3] Fitzpatrick, B., *Frail Anne Boleyn*, 224 ff.

preachers of unorthodox doctrine, one William Broman confessed "That one Bale, a White Friar, sometime prior of Doncaster, taught him about four years ago that Christ would dwell in no church made of lime and stone by man's hands, but only in heaven above, and in man's heart in earth."[4] Broman's statement of Bale's teaching is paralleled in Bale's *Three Laws* (1369–71):

> Nor yet, as they call it, a temple of lime and stone;
> But a livish building, grounded in faith alone,
> On the hard rock, Christ, which is the sure foundation.

Some incidents which followed close upon the heels of Broman's confession tend to indicate that there may be a connection between Broman's statement and its parallel in Bale's play. If this connection were strong enough, it would prove that Bale's *Three Laws* had been written by 1531, the date of Bale's statement to Broman. The circumstances are as follows.

In 1536, the next year after Broman's confession which involved him among others as a teacher of unorthodox theology, Bale was called upon to explain certain of his assertions made in his sermons. He prepared a written statement which is preserved in the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII* (XI, 446–47). Among other matters, he seeks to explain his attitude on the Creed, or a part of the Creed. He had told his congregation, he says, not to believe the Creed, or a part of the Creed, as " . . . set forth in painted clothes or in glass windows, or like as myself had before time set it forth in the country there in a certain play." He adds that "they must not suppose that Christ fought violently with devils for the souls of the faithful." The only extant play of Bale which contains a *creed* and which meets the situation set forth in the additional statement is the *Three Laws*. This play (1183–1202) contains a mock creed in English, and Bale's parishioners would have needed warning, no doubt, that this was not *the* creed which they were to believe. Likewise, this play in Act IV does set forth a struggle between Christi Lex and certain devilish minions. So it seems certain that the *Three Laws* is the play alluded to by Bale in his defense. Hence, the *Three Laws* was involved as one of the sources of unorthodox tenets previous to Bale's statement concerning the Creed in 1536. And, as previously pointed out, Broman's confession in 1535 parallels very closely a passage in the play of the *Three Laws*.

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[4] *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, IX, 76.

Bale's statement to Broman, in 1531, that "Christ would dwell in no church made of lime and stone by man's hands, but only in heaven above, and in man's heart in earth" is no more than a statement of the Protestant view of the Sacrament of the Altar which was opposed to the Catholic notion of the *real presence* of the body and blood of Christ in the bread and wine; and, as such, it shows that Bale was sufficiently Protestant in 1531, even though he still wore the robe of a Carmelite, to have written such a thorough-going Protestant piece as the *Three Laws*. Protestants of the sixteenth century frequently cited articles of the Apostles' Creed in defense of their attitude towards the Sacrament of the Altar. John Lambert, the martyr, says, after the Creed, that Christ "sitteth at the right hand of God his Father," and "From thence shall he come to judge the quick and the dead"; consequently, his body and blood cannot be really present in the sacrament.[5] Prest's wife during her examination argued: "I will demand of you, whether you can deny your creed, which doth say, that Christ doth perpetually sit at the right hand of his Father . . . If he be not here, and if he do not dwell in temples made with hands, but in heaven, what, shall we seek him here?"[6]

The fact that Bale's defense in 1536, following upon the heels of Broman's confession, is partly a defense or explanation of the parody creed in the *Three Laws*, and that the *Three Laws* and Broman's confession are linked by the parallel noted above, sets a general connection between the *confession*, on the one hand, and the play, and, on the other hand, between the play and Bale's defense in 1536. If, as pointed out above, the connection between Broman's confession in 1535, Bale's *Three Laws*, and the *Defense* in 1536, will stand examination, the *Three Laws* was extant in 1531, for Bale's statement to Broman dates back four years prior to 1535.

Another circumstance which may aid in this conclusion has to do with an allusion in the play. In Act IV of the play of *Three Laws*, Infidelitas, Hypocrisis, and Pseudodoctrina concoct a scheme to overthrow Evangelium. To help in this work, they propose to enlist the aid, among others, of a "catchpole" named "Wharton of Bongaye," (line 1616). This seems curious when it is noted that Wharton of Bungay was a spy and informer for Thomas Cromwell.[7] In a letter

[5] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 239. [6] *Ibid.*, VIII, 498.

[7] *Letters and Papers*, V, No. 769. (This was one of the first of a series of letters from Wharton to Cromwell.)

of February 3, 1532, to Cromwell, Wharton reveals his relationship with him.[8] Since Bale himself was acting in a somewhat similar capacity, his reference to Wharton as a likely prospect to help the enemies of the New Learning may be explained in one of three ways. The allusion may be retained from a version of the play written before Wharton's new relationship was established—before 1532. It may have been written in ignorance of Wharton's real status, or, it may have been written to indicate that Bale thought that Wharton was playing a hypocritical part.

While no single circumstance pointed out above is sufficient grounds for arriving at any definite conclusion regarding the date of any of Bale's extant dramas, in the aggregate these circumstances do indicate that Bale was operating as a maker of plays at an earlier date than has previously been noted. That he had written *comedies* by 1534, there seems no doubt. That the first versions of *King John* and of the *Three Laws* were in the list completed by 1534 seems likely.[9] That Bale was enough of a Protestant in faith by 1531 to have written any one of his plays, the confession of W. Broman showing Bale's attitude on the Sacrament of the Altar proves conclusively. And, that the *Three Laws* had been written by this date (1531) seems probable.

As noted above, *King John*, like the *Three Laws*, was in existence by 1536, with strong possibilities of having been written by about 1533–34. However, the unique manuscript of the play, which dates from about 1561, shows evidence that the play itself passed through several stages of revision.[10] Hence, it is rather difficult to determine

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[8] *Ibid.*

[9] It is of some interest in this connection to observe what seems to have been a revival of interest in the fate of King John in his struggle with the Roman Church, just at this time. Writing of Henry VIII, in 1533, the imperial ambassador said, "For his part Henry VIII meant to remedy it, and repair the error of Kings Henry II and John, who, by deceit, being in difficulties, had made this realm and Ireland tributary." (*Letters and Papers*, VI, 235; VII, 94.) See Constant, G., *The Reformation in England*, trans. by R. E. Scantlebury, I, 2.

[10] The play is a composite, cast by Bale in 1561 from two separate versions. Its history is briefly as follows. The original play in two parts was written by Bale prior to 1536. In 1538, Bale conceived the notion of recasting the original two-part play into "a single piece suitable for stage production. In doing so, he introduced allusions to contemporary events . . ." Under Edward VI, Bale revised the original two-part drama, introducing contemporary allusions. On the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Ipswich, in August, 1561, "Bale took up again the long-discarded stage version, the *A text*, and set about revising it for the occasion, having before him the Edwardian recension of the original two-part play." Further, "The explicit that Bale wrote at the end of the composite manuscript was borrowed from the copy before him, and properly referred, not to the acting version at all, but to the original two-part play described in the lists." See Pafford, *King John*, "Introduction," Malone Society, 1931.

the nature of the original play on *King John*, although one may assume that its purpose was the same as that of the surviving play. Perhaps the most interesting fact in connection with the discovery of this early *King John* is that it disproves influences on Bale which have usually been assumed to have led to the writing of the play.

It has been taken for granted that the remaining extant plays, *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation*, were all written in 1538.[11] That date appears on the title-pages of the printed copies; and the fact that these titles are not in the list in *Anglorum Heliades* strengthens the supposition that the plays themselves were not written before 1538. It should be observed, however, that the inscription "Compyled" in 1538, which appears in the title-pages of the first printed copies of all the plays published by Bale, does not necessarily apply to the original composition: this fact has been demonstrated conclusively in the case of the *Three Laws*. And, although there is no positive evidence to support a conjecture that there were earlier versions of the three dramas referred to, close observation of Bale's growth as a dramatist leads one to believe that such a supposition would be plausible.

The stages in Bale's evolution as a writer of dramatic pieces seem to have been determined largely by his immediate environment. In his early years, the miracle and morality plays of the Middle Ages were still the principal forms of dramatic entertainment in England. And it is an interesting fact that the first play in Bale's earliest list of his own productions is one which probably was in

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The only part of Mr. Pafford's thesis to which the present writer cares to take exception is the second step which alleges that in 1538 the author recast the original two-part play into a play of one part. As Mr. Pafford himself points out, the *incipit* given for the play by Bale in his own catalogues ought to approximate the first line of the play, but the two are different. The *incipit* in Bale's catalogues of writers reads, "When I the Lord through his eternal favor," while the first line of the play runs, "To declare the powre, & the strength to enlarge." The following seems to the present writer a reasonable explanation of what actually happened in 1538 to produce a one-part version of *King John*. As will be discussed at more length in another place, Bale organized a company of players in 1538. As will also be indicated at greater length later, Bale wrote his first series of plays c. 1534 for the Earl of Oxford. Oxford supported a company of players, and one naturally concludes that Bale wrote the plays for productions by this company. Likewise one naturally supposes that the plays were delivered to Oxford c. 1534. Evidently when Bale organized his company of players in 1538, the group of plays written for Oxford had not yet been returned to Bale, for when he outlined the list in his *Anglorum Heliades* (1536), he apparently did not have the dramas in his possession. This may be assumed from the fact that he did not write the *incipits* at the time, but did that later, apparently after retrieving the plays from the Earl of Oxford. (The manuscript is in the hand of a scribe, but the *incipits* are in Bale's own hand.) If this theory is correct, then Bale presumably wrote a new, rather than revised, version of *King John* for his immediate needs in 1538.

[11] Chambers, E. K., *Mediaeval Stage*, II, 224.

imitation of the older miracles. This was a *Vita D. Joannis Baptistae* in fourteen *libri*. If a *liber* in this non-extant drama was equivalent to one as represented in the extant plays, the *Joannis Baptistae* in fourteen *libri* probably consisted of a cycle in the manner of the older miracles. Some of the lost works which follow in the list were probably of the same type.[12] In other words, it seems a reasonable conjecture that our author's first interest in drama arose from observation of the miracles and moralities which were the common dramatic entertainment in the days of his youth, and that his earliest plays were imitations of the kind mentioned above.

Actually Bale first appears in the records as a composer of dramas for the Earl of Oxford who supported a company of players.[13] It does not seem probable, however, that he should have written for Oxford without some previous experience as a playwright. Thus, it was at this stage of his career that he began to write for a professional troupe of actors, involving (as pointed out on page 75) certain new requirements in the structure of his plays. A drama in fourteen *libri*, like the one on the life of John the Baptist, assuming that the extant plays are representative of what Bale meant by the word *liber*, would not meet these new requirements, but rather belongs, we conjecture, to the pre-Protestant period of his career as a playwright. The extant plays, as indicated heretofore, do meet the needs of the professional troupe. Thus, the surviving works of *King John* and the *Three Laws* are known to have been revised from older compositions. It is not impossible that *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation* may, likewise, have been written from older pieces in the list, on the same subject matter but of different titles; consequently, the original versions of these plays may possibly date from some years earlier than 1538.

By way of conclusion, we may note the following facts about the dates of Bale's dramatic works. He had written fourteen dramas, including the extant *Three Laws* and *King John*, before the composition of *Anglorum Heliades* in 1536. Further, as has been pointed out, these fourteen plays had perhaps been composed by 1533–34, with some indication that the *Three Laws* was extant as early as 1531–32. That the fragmentary cycle of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation* may likewise have existed in an earlier version has been conjectured on the basis of Bale's revisions of extant plays to meet the needs of the professional acting troupe of the age.

[12] Chambers, E. K., *op. cit.* [13] See p. 76 for Bale's relations with Oxford.

After observing the early date of composition of the plays, one naturally turns to their further classification. Earlier in this discussion, some notice was taken of the qualities these pieces had in common with contemporary works, as well as their particular contribution to the growth of the type. Then some space was given to a discussion of the extant dramas as controversial pieces. In addition to being controversial plays—which type Bale had a major part in developing—these works also have to be classified according to dramatic types.

Chapter 12

THE CYCLE PLAYS

John Bale at various phases of his career recorded three separate lists of plays which he had composed. He wrote a total of twenty-one dramas, and translated the *Pammachius* of Thomas Kirchmayer. Only five of these works survive. They are entitled: "*God's Promises*," "*John the Baptist*," "*The Temptation*," "*The Three Laws*," and "*King John*."[1] The original list, recorded by Bale in a manuscript of 1536, entitled *Anglorum Heliades*, consisted of fourteen plays, all written between 1531 and 1536. Although, as was his custom in such lists, Bale set down the titles and first lines in Latin, these dramatic pieces were all written in *idiomati vulgari*, as he himself testifies.[2] These fourteen compositions he wrote for John Vere, the first Protestant Earl of Oxford.[3] Vere, who supported a number of players in his household, was active in the movement to divorce the English church from Rome. The plays were Protestant polemics. In fact, one of them dealt with the question of the king's two marriages. Consequently, one readily infers that they were intended to be used by Oxford's players to popularize the Protestant program. The second list, which contains the full quota of twenty-one plays and the translation, appears in Bale's 1548 catalogue of writers, his *Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum Summarium*. This list is repeated (with minor variations) in the 1557 edition of the catalogue, or *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytanniae Catalogus*.[4] This is a revised and enlarged repertoire used by the author's own company of "fellows." It grew out of Bale's activity as a propagandist under the patronage of Thomas Cromwell, 1537–40.

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[1] For full titles, see list of Bale's works. [2] Bale, J., *Anglorum Heliades*, 112. [3] *Ibid.*

[4] List of Bale's plays from *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus:*

Vitam D. Ioannis Baptistae, Lib. 14.
De Christo duodenni, Com. 1.
De baptismo & tentatione, Com. 2.
De Lazaro resuscitato, Com. 1.
De consilio pontificum, Com. 1.
De Simone leproso, Com. 1.
De coena Do. & pedum lotione, Com. 1.
De passione Christi, Com. 2.
De sepultura & resurrectione, Com. 2.
Super utroque regis coniugio, Lib. 2.
De sectis Papisticis, Lib. 2.
Erga Momos & Zoilos, Lib. 2.
Proditiones Papistarum, Lib. 2.
Contra adulterantes Dei verbum, Lib. 1.
De Ioanne Anglorum rege, Lib. 2.
De imposturis Thomae Becketi, Lib. 1.
De magnis Dei promissionibus, Lib. 1.
De praedicatione Ioannis, Lib. 1.
De Christi tentatione, Lib. 1.
Corruptiones legum diuinarum, Lib. 1.
Amoris imaginem, Lib. 1.
Pammachii tragoedias transtuli, Lib. 4.

See Appendix for the other two lists of plays as set forth by Bale.

As previously pointed out, Bale wrote his plays to supply the definite needs, first, of the Earl of Oxford, and, second, of his own company of fellows. His venture into the field of drama at this stage, therefore, was purposeful. An examination of the full list of dramatic pieces written by John Bale will impress one likewise with the fact that he perhaps had in mind a definite scheme or cycle. By glancing through the list, one can select a cycle of plays which progressively reveals the various events in the life of Christ. In order of selection from Bale's own list, this cycle would comprise the following:

1. *Vitam D. Ioannis Baptistae.*
2. *De Christo duodenni.*
3. *De baptismo & tentatione.*
4. *De Lazaro resuscitato.*
5. *De consilio pontificum.*
6. *De Simone leproso.*
7. *De coena Do. & pedum lotione.*
8. *De passione Christi.*
9. *De sepultura & resurrectione.*
10. *De magnis Dei promissionibus.*
11. *De praedicatione Ioannis.*
12. *De Christi tentatione.*

Only the last three plays in this group are extant, and it is to them that we must turn for evidence of a deliberate purpose on the part of the author to create a great cycle of plays on the life of Christ.[5]

So far as these three plays are concerned, the author makes his purpose quite clear. He wrote them to be acted in the order of the events which they set forth, first, *God's Promises*, then, *John the Baptist*, and, finally, the *Temptation*. In the first of these, the author gives a sweeping review of events in the Old Testament, from Adam through Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah, which mark God's untiring efforts to keep in the fold his most noble creation, man. The last act of *God's Promises* serves as an introduction to the play which is to follow, i.e., *John the Baptist*. To the Baptist, God says:

> I promyse the sure, thu shalt washe hym amonge them,
> In Iordane a floude, not farre from Hierusalem.

And, *God's Promises* concludes with the announcement:

> More of thys matter, conclude herafter we shall.

The prophecy in the last act of *God's Promises* is fulfilled in *John the Baptist*, for Christ appears and is baptized in Jordan by John the Baptist. Likewise, as predicted in the previous play, the spirit in the

[5] The main features of this cycle were pointed out by E. E. Jones in his edition of *God's Promises* (1907). What the relationship between the last three plays and some of the earlier titles may have been we have no way of knowing at present; but there is some possibility that they represent revisions of the earlier forms for acting purposes.

form of a dove descends on Christ. In this manner, the *Temptation* was composed for performance immediately following the presentation of *John the Baptist.* In the prologue to the *Temptation*, Bale announces:

> After hys baptyme Christ was Gods sonne declared
> By the fathers voyce, as ye before haue hearde.

If any further evidence of the author's intention is needed, it has been supplied by Bale himself in a description of the acting in succession of the plays by his "young men" at Kilkenny, in Ireland, on the very day that Mary Tudor was crowned Queen of England. "The yonge men," he says, "in the forenone, played a tragedye of Gods promyses in the olde lawe, at the Market Crosse, with organe, plainges, and songes very aptely. In the afternone agayne they played a comedie of Sanct Johan Baptistes preachinges, of Christes baptisynge, and of his temptacion in the wildernesse, to the small contentacion of the prestes and other papistes there."[6]

The above points prove beyond a doubt that Bale's three surviving plays on the life of Christ were written to be acted in a series. Whether or not these surviving works are merely the fragment of a great cycle on the life of Christ cannot be ascertained with absolute certainty, but this would seem to be a reasonable conclusion. In that case, it would be obvious that Bale's underlying motive may have been the ambitious one of re-creating the old cycle plays dealing with the events in the life of Christ into a series more in keeping with the new order of things in his native country. That he was keenly aware of the Protestant movement in the field of drama is indicated by an outburst made not long after his first flight from England. "None," he bemoans, "leave ye unvexed and untroubled—no, not so much as the poore ministrels, and players of interludes, but ye are doing with them. So long as they played lyes, and sange baudy songes, blasphemed God, and corrupted mens consciences, ye never blamed them, but were very well contented. But sens they persuaded people to worship theyr Lorde God aryght, accordyng to hys holie lawes and not yours, and to acknowledge Jesus Chryst for their onelye redeemer and saviour, without your lowsie legerdemains, ye neuer were pleased with them."[7] Such a reinterpretation of the old drama is likewise altogether consistent with the underlying motive in all the other numerous compositions of Bale. As has been pointed out

[6] Bale, J., *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, 345.
[7] Bale, J., *Epistel Exhortatorye* (1544).

previously, the one avowed purpose of Bale was to bring the various subjects he touched in line with the ever-growing movement of the New Learning. Certainly, this is what he does in the surviving plays of his production.

Before proceeding further with this discussion, it will perhaps be helpful to observe these first three works individually. To this end, they will be taken up in their regular order in the cycle.

"*A Tragedye or enterlude manyfestyng the chefe promyses of God vnto man by all ages in the olde lawe, from the fall of Adam to the incarnacyon of the lorde Iesus Christ.* Compyled by Iohan Bale. Anno Domini M.D.XXXVIII."[8] This is a part of the revised list of plays which Bale prepared for his own use, when he began to exhibit his plays under the patronage of Cromwell, about 1538. That *God's Promises* was composed and acted as an introduction to the cycle on the life of Chirst, we have already indicated.

The play is in seven *acts*, so-called. In *Act I* we see the angry Pater Coelestis threatening dire punishment upon Adam, "Whych for an Apple, neglected my commaundement." Adam, however, pleads that man is doomed to fall before temptation in the absence of God's merciful grace. Adam's pleas for mercy eventually cause the Pater Coelestis to relent. Henceforth, it is decreed that womankind and the serpent will dissent, and her seed will "presse downe hys heade vnto the grounde." By this seed Adam will be cleared of guilt. *Act II* opens in the same way. A disappointed Pater Coelestis vows destruction upon an erring people, who have fallen before temptation. On this occasion, Noah pleads for mankind. God refuses to spare his erring subjects, but decrees that all shall perish save Noah and his family, "And of yche kynde two, to maynteyne yow herafter." *Act III* opens with Pater Coelestis in the act of destroying "Sodom and Gomor." He is, however, moved to mercy by the strong plea of Abraham, to whom he promises,

> Of manye peoples, the father I wyll make the,
> . . . . . .
> And by the same sede, the worlde shall be redressed.

[8] This title is not in the list of 1536. There seems no good reason for doubting the date of 1538, which stands in the title of the first printed copy. It was first printed about 1547, apparently by D. van der Straten, of Wesel, shortly before Bale's return from his first exile abroad. An edition was printed in London, in 1577, by John Charlwoode for Stephen Peele. The first edition had been so far forgotten that this edition was described as "now fyrst imprynted." So far as is known, only one copy of the first edition is now extant. In 1744, Robert Dodsley included the play in his *Select Collection of Old Plays*. Dodsley had procured the play from the Harley library, and it is now the property of the British Museum. Since the time of Dodsley, *God's Promises* has been made available in other editions.

Likewise, in *Act IV*, Moses successfully pleads erring mankind's cause. God promises,

> Raise them vp I wyll, a prophet from amonge them,
> Not vnlike to the, to speake my wordes vnto them.

In *Act V*, David's plea wins the promise,

> A frute there shall come, forth yssuynge from they bodye,
> Whom I wyll aduaunce, vpon thy seate for euer.

In *Act VI*, Isaiah wins the promise,

> . . . A mayde of Israel
> Shall conceyue and beare, that Lord Emanuel.

In the final act of the play, Pater Coelestis reviews the numerous occasions upon which he has rescued mankind from the slough of sin, only to see him fall again before the wiles of the devil. As the climax to His efforts to show man a way to perfect righteousness, He will send Christ to the world. To announce these glad tidings, He decrees that John the Baptist shall be His mouthpiece. Baleus Prolocutor then reviews the play and enforces the moral:

> Where is now fre wyll, whom hypocrites comment,
> Wherby they report, they maye at their owne pleasure,
> Do good of themselves, though grace and faythe be absent.
> And haue good intentes, their madnesse with to measure.
> The wyll of the fleshe, is proued here small treasure,
> And so is mannys wyll, for the grace of God doth all.
> More of thys matter, conclude herafter we shall.

Thus, Bale's motive in this play is to demonstrate that only through grace and faith can one win eternal salvation, whereas the notion of free will, good works, and good intentions, leads only to eternal damnation. The play, therefore, is a partisan piece, written to support the cause of the New Learning. And, for the first time in the history of English drama, God was made to stand forth as advocate of a strictly partisan theology.

At first glance, *God's Promises*, set as it is in an outline of the Scriptures, must impress one as belonging in the category of the miracle play, and more often than not it has been so classified. There is no intention here of denying the justice of such a classification. From the point of view of the present discussion, however, the play appears fundamentally as a form of the morality drama. As such, the play would be interpreted as follows. Mankind in every age has

fallen through temptation into sin, to be rescued by God's promises, climaxed by the promise of Christ's coming. Man universal, however, never appears on the stage in person. Only a self-appointed advocate, a Noah or an Isaiah, appears before the high judge, Pater Coelestis, to plead for another chance for erring Mankind. The struggle of Mankind between temptation and the desire to observe God's commands is not actually given on the stage, but it is implied in the speeches of Pater Coelestis and the advocate. Moreover, that main characteristic of the moral play *the teaching of a lesson for the guidance of life* is the great purpose of this play. The Scriptural story is only incidental, a means to an end.

That *God's Promises* is a pure morality, no one would attempt to prove. "I hope," wrote Robert Dodsley, in 1744, "the Reader will not imagine, I give any of the Pieces in this Volume as good; but only as Curiosities, and to shew from what low Beginnings our Stage has arisen."[9] Dodsley's opinion of *God's Promises* as a play is a judgment with which any reader will agree. In fact, Bale had no intention of writing a good play, and, even had he wished to write a good one, there is nowhere any evidence that he could have accomplished it. In his Prologue, Bale warns his audience to expect no "tryfeling sport, in fantasyes fayned, nor soche lyke gaudysh gere." To the contrary, our author proposed to give his hearers "thynges that shall, your inwarde stomake chere." Hence, the important feature, in Bale's eyes, was the *motive*, not the form in which the play was cast. This conclusion is borne out by an examination of the structure of the play.

The play is made up of seven interviews between God and the various representatives of mankind. God is the central figure of the piece, remaining on the stage throughout the action. One at a time, the other characters come, speak their parts, and retire. Thus, the whole play could have been done by Bale and one assistant. In other words, it consists of seven short dialogues. Undoubtedly, as to this play alone, dialogue of an argumentative kind is the most significant feature of the structure. Because the author's purpose was the exposition of an idea, a dramatized sermon, the method is perhaps as effective as any other. There is less chance of losing sight of the author's purpose here, to say the least, than if he had brought mankind on the stage, repeatedly through the ages to fall into the slough

[9] Dodsley, R., *Select Collection of Old Plays*, I, 2.

of sin and repeatedly to be rescued by a Supreme Being determined to make a success of what looks like a hopeless endeavor.

There remains the problem of what Bale meant when he called *God's Promises* a tragedy or interlude, and where he got the notion of labeling the parts of his play as acts. Since these are problems which, if explained at all, must be explained on the basis of all the plays rather than on that of any single drama, their discussion will be deferred until a later stage in this study. We turn now to the second play in the group.

"*A brefe Comedy or Enterlude of Johan Baptystes preachynge in the wyldernesse, openynge the craftye assaultes of the hypocrytes, and with the gloryouse Baptyme of the Lord Jesus Christ.*" This, the second play in the fragmentary series around the life of Christ, was likewise composed about 1538.[10]

In the last act of *God's Promises*, as noted above, God appointed John the Baptist to announce the coming of Christ, to reprove the people for their sins, and to baptise Christ in the Jordan. The play of *John the Baptist* sees the fulfillment of these commands. Following the Prologue, John announces the imminent coming of Jesus Christ. The Common People, the Publican, and Miles Armatus rejoice. After advising them to seek God through faith rather than through works, John the Baptist inquires about the means of livelihood of the people in his audience. Common People explains that he lives by the sweat of his brow; the Publican is a collector of tax and tollage; and Miles is a soldier. Each in turn professes his sins, and is baptized by John. At this point, the Pharisee and the Sadducee appear on the scene. They dislike the preachings of John. "This fellow preacheth new learning," says the Pharisee. They decide to investigate more closely into the doings of the Baptist—"His doctrine, peraventure, might hinder else our livings." John the Baptist and his two sly opponents engage in an argument in which they egg him on to the limits of his patience. "Outward works ye have," says John, "but in spirit nothing at all." They twit him into an outburst, in the course of which he calls them vipers, murderers of the prophets, proud Lucifers, and usurpers of high seats. In contrast to John, the Pharisee and the Sadducee play their game coolly.

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[10] The play of *John the Baptist* was first published about 1547. It was reprinted in the *Harleian Miscellany*, and more recently edited by John S. Farmer. As previously indicated the play was performed as part of the series of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation*, at Kilkenny in 1553.

"With a little help," says Sadducee aside to Pharisee, "of an heretic he will smell." After this, the two depart to determine a further course of action. Christ now appears, and is baptized by John the Baptist. "*Descendit tunc super Christum spiritus sanctus in columbae specie . . .* " Baleus Prolocutor enforces the lesson "that faith should purify the heart."

Although the framework of this play is in the Bible narrative, the theme is partisan, and the dispute of Pharisee and Sadducee with John the Baptist is an argument between Catholic and Protestant—the idea of *good works* opposed to that of *faith alone*. The sleek and self-satisfied Pharisee and Sadducee fall in perfectly with Bale's idea of the hypocritical representatives of the Roman Church, who in their well-protected smugness and subtle hairsplittings had altogether forgotten the primitive constitution of the church. On the other hand, the simplicity and asceticism of John the Baptist, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, was more in keeping with Bale's conception of the ideals of the New Learning.

There is much in Bale's *John the Baptist* that reminds one of the later Calvinistic play, *New Custom*. The parts, which in each play are arranged so that they may be played by four people, are parallel. The parts of New Custom or Primitive Constitution and of John the Baptist are much alike, although the two characters themselves are quite different in temperament. The Pharisee and Sadducee of *John the Baptist* are much akin to Perverse Doctrine and Ignorance, the two Popish priests of *New Custom*, who scheme the downfall of New Custom, whose ideas, like those of John, smack of the New Learning.

The play of *John the Baptist*, as already pointed out, is very closely related to the third member of the group, the *Temptation*, whose full title reads: "*A brefe Comedy or enterlude concernynge the temptacyon of our lorde and sauer Jesus Christ, by Sathan in the desart.* Compyled by Johan Bale, Anno M.D.XXXVIII."[11] This play was seemingly first published at Wesel, about 1547.[12] It was probably, says W. W. Greg, printed in the same volume with *John the Baptist*, and this may be further evidence of the existence of the cycle.[13] Only one known copy of the original edition survives. The play was edited in 1870 by Reverend Alexander B. Grosart, and more recently by Farmer and others.[14]

[11] Edited by P. Schwemmer. [12] *Short Title Catalogue*, 30.
[13] *The Library*, XI, 55. [14] See list of Bale's works.

After the Prologue, Christ (in 20 lines) explains who he is, why he is in the desert, and what will happen to him there. Satan (in 24 lines) introduces himself and reveals his purpose. Now, he approaches Christ and requests permission to walk with him. Then follow the three temptations. First, Christ, famished by forty days of fasting, is tempted by Satan to turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger. Christ replies that God will provide food when the time is fitting. Satan warns Christ to deny the report that he is God's son and to refrain from preaching, for "Preache ye ones the truth, the byshoppes wyll ye murther." Christ replies by quoting Scripture:

> Man lyueth not by breade or corporall fedynge onlye,
> But by Gods promyse and by hys scriptures heauenlye.

Failing in his first effort, Satan now takes Christ up to the pinnacle in the city of Jerusalem, where he tempts Christ to fling himself down, in order to prove that he is God's Son. Satan cites Scriptural passages to show that God has commanded angels to protect his Son in such an instance. Christ thwarts this argument by showing that God must not be tempted presumptuously. Such presumptuous temptation is the part of those who set aside grace and rely on good intents. Satan now takes Christ to the mountain top, and shows him the kingdoms of the world. Satan's temptation of Christ to worldly power is no more effective than the others had been. Though temporarily foiled, Satan yet foresees the downfall of Christ at a future date:

> Thy vycar at Rome, I thynke, wyll be my frynde.
> I defye the therfor and take thy wordes but as wynde.
> He shall me worshypp and haue the worlde to rewarde.
> That thu here forsakest, he wyll most hyghlye regarde.
> Gods worde wyll he treade vnderneth hys fote for euer
> And the hartes of men from the truth therof dysseuer.
> Thy fayth wyll he hate and flee thy flocke in conclusyon:
> All thys wyll I worke, to do the vtter confusyon.

Two angels appear in order to administer to the needs of Christ, and they conclude the play with a song of praise.

The *Temptation* is well suited to Bale's purposes in writing plays. Faith and the Scriptures constitute the proper armour for a Christian man against the wiles of the Devil. Hence, in this play as in all the others, Bale uses the Bible story to enforce a Protestant moral. It is of passing interest that the idea expressed by Bale in the lines quoted above was developed by his German contemporary, Kirchmayer,

in his Protestant drama, *Pammachius*, in this same year, 1538. Bale translated *Pammachius*, possibly also in this same year, and certainly previous to the publication of his own plays in 1547.

It is evident, as shown in the preceding discussion, that the three surviving plays of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation* were written and used as part of a cycle on the life of Christ. We have no way of knowing whether the other plays in the list, dealing with the events in the life of Christ, were intended as part of this cycle, but probably they were.

Chapter 13

BALE'S MORALITY PLAYS

The cycle plays discussed in a previous chapter were not, as pointed out, pure morality dramas. In fact, of the five now extant, only one is an uncorrupted morality, although there undoubtedly were others among his productions. The full title of the one pure morality reads as follows: "*A new comedy or Enterlude, concerning the three lawes, of Nature, Moses, and Christe, corrupted by the Sodomytes, Pharysies, and Papastes.* Compiled anno 1538, and lately imprinted per Nicolaum Bamburgensem."[1]

Of the extant plays of Bale, the *Three Laws* appears to have been the earliest in date of composition. The date on the title-page, 1538, is misleading. The play was apparently revised in 1538, but the original was composed by 1536, as indicated by its inclusion in the list in *Anglorum Heliades* which dates from that year.[2] The possibility that the *Three Laws* may be dated as early as 1531 has been discussed elsewhere.[3] As was observed many years ago by Warton in his *History of English Poetry*, Bale's *Three Laws* is undoubtedly the first extant Protestant morality in English. Professor Arnold Schröer has attempted to displace Bale's play by Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, on the supposition that the former was not written until 1538. Even if we accept 1535 as the date of Lyndsay's play, Bale's *Three Laws*, assuming that 1531 is the approximate date of its composition, still precedes the Scottish drama by at least four years.[4]

In substance, the *Three Laws* is the most violently controversial drama in English literature. And, although the edition which survives represents a revised version dating allegedly from about

[1] Edited by A. Schröer.

[2] See pp. 68 ff. for complete discussion of the date of the *Three Laws*.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] The *Three Laws* was published in 1547. That it could not have been printed earlier than the first year of Edward VI is indicated by references to the late King Henry, and to the Lord Protector. Information supplied by Bale in his *Franticke papyst of Hamshyre* shows that the play could not have been printed later than 1547. In this book, published in 1552, he says that the *Three Laws* was published "about vj. years ago." Since the play could not have been printed earlier than the first year of Edward VI, it is clear that it was first published in 1547. This is the only play of Bale which contains the name of a publisher. At the end of the play, it is stated that the *Three Laws* was "lately imprented per Nicolaum Bamburgensem." Various efforts to identify 'Nicolaum Bamburgensem' have proved futile. The play was probably printed at Antwerp. Another edition of the *Three Laws* was published in London, in 1562, by Thomas Colwell. This is the play referred to in the *Stationer's Register:* "Recvyd [of] Thomas Colwell for his lycense for pryntinge of *a Comyde or interlude of Master John Bale* .... *vj*^{d}."

1538, the original was probably compiled about 1531–32. Bale in person opened his play with a prologue, in which he outlined the action and introduced the first character, Deus Pater. In turn, Deus Pater gives instructions to each of the three laws of Nature, Moses, and Christ. The Law of Nature will be man's guide through three ages, from Adam to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses: his special task is to live in man's heart and guide his conscience. In turn, the Law of Moses is to guide man through three ages, from Moses to David, to the exile, and thence to Christ: to him God delivers the stone tablets bearing the laws. After that, the Law of Christ is to rule until the end of the world: to Christi Lex, Deus Pater gives the New Testament. In Act II, the Law of Nature, beginning his work, is interrupted by Infidelitas, the villain of the piece, who enters, disguised as a broom-peddlar crying his wares. This impudent lout characterizes the claims of the Law of Nature as a "tale of a tub." Infidelitas boasts to the Law of Nature that he will foil him through Idolatry and Sodomy. To rid himself of this lewd boaster, the Law of Nature leaves the stage. This makes way for Idolatry and Sodomy, who are conjured forth by their master, Infidelitas. Idolatry, who is "decked lyke an olde wytche," has the power, according to her own testimony, to ease the toothache by charms, fetch the devil from hell, to "mylke the cow and hunt the fox," and to "helpe men of the ague and poxe." She can fetch again "all that is lost," and "drawe drynke out of a rotten post," and like a true "religious" she recommends the magical power of the saints as protection against mishap. Sodomy, who is dressed as a "monke of all sectes," has the clergy under his thumb.[5] He describes his influence with the clergy thus:

> And now the popysh hypocrytes,
> Embrace me euery where.
> I am now become all spyrytuall,
> For the clergye at Rome and ouer all,
> For want of wyues to me doth fall,
> To God they haue no feare.

Further to prove his qualifications for evil doing, Sodomy gives a full list of his practitioners, as well as a list of those who have warned the world against him. Because of the ban on marriage, Sodomy will continue as long as monkish sects and popish priests endure. After this exposition of their special qualifications for the work, Idolatry

[5] *Three Laws*, Directions for "aparellynge of the six vyces," *Anglia*, V, p. 223.

and Sodomy are instructed by Infidelitas to set about corrupting the Law of Nature. This end will be accomplished largely through the Church with its superstitious rites:

> Take this same staffe and scryppe,
> With a God here of a chyppe,
> And good beldame forewarde hyppe,
> To set fourth pylgrymage
> . . . . . .
> Here is a purse of rellyckes,
> Ragges, rotten bones, and styckes,
> A taper with other tryckes,
> Shewe them in euery soyle.

Thus, the plot is laid, and the two chief props of Infidelitas go out to corrupt the Law of Nature. Infidelitas, now alone on the stage, predicts the complete success of his lieutenants:

> The one to poyson the hart,
> The other the outwarde part.

Infidelitas departs, and the Law of Nature, strangely altered, reappears on the stage. He is now "throwne in a leprye," thoroughly corrupted, not by his own sin but by that of mankind. Act III presents a situation exactly parallel to that in Act II. Seeing his first law so grievously corrupted, Deus Pater sends the Law of Moses "To see hym for synne substancyallye corrected." The Law of Moses is quite willing to do his part, but Infidelitas again comes upon the stage. After an exchange of words with Infidelitas, the Law of Moses being a virtue and therefore at a great disadvantage in an encounter with a foul-mouthed vice, betakes himself from the stage. Infidelitas then summons Ambition and Covetousness. Ambition promises:

> With fylthy gloses, and dyrty exposysyons,
> Of Godes lawe wyll I hyde, the pure dysposycyons.
> The keye of knowledge, I wyll also take awaye,
> By wrastynge the text, to the scriptures sore decaye.

Covetousness will do his work:

> A vayle wyll I sprede, vpon the face of Moses,
> That non shal perceyue, the clereness of hys contenaunce.

The Commandments must be poisoned "with wyll workes and good intentes." To this end, Covetousness sets up a new Creed, in English, whereby the people shall believe in Pope, ceremonies, sacra-

mentals, purgatory, pardons, saints, relics, *free will, and good works*, and other Romish matters. Now, Infidelitas dispatches his lieutenants to corrupt the Law of Moses. After their departure, Infidelitas explains what is happening to the Law of Moses. Then, the Law of Moses, made stark blind by the work of Ambition and Covetousness, comes upon the stage. His explanation of how this fearful change has been worked concludes the third act. In Act IV, the Law of Christ is corrupted by Infidelitas through Hypocrisy and False Doctrine. The Law of Christ (or Evangelium), after the first verbal clash with Infidelitas, leaves the stage. Infidelitas then welcomes False Doctrine and Hypocrisy, who qualify themselves as corrupters of the Law of Christ. In suppressing the Gospel, they will have the assistance of four knights—namely, ambitious prelates, covetous lawyers, lords without learning, and unrighteous justices. At this point, for the first time in the play, some action takes place on the stage. Infidelitas departs leaving False Doctrine and Hypocrisy alone. The Law of Christ appears before these two. He is prepared to preach the gospel, but his two earthy opponents warn him not to preach without first getting permission from the Pope or from a bishop. In the ensuing argument, the Law of Christ contends for the Gospel, while his opponents uphold papistical practices. At the proper moment, Infidelitas re-enters, with a pardon in his sleeve and a popish speech at his tongue's end:

> Good christen people, I am come hyther verelye,
> As a true proctour, of the house of saynt Antonye.
> Of cleane remussyon, I haue brought ye indulgence,
> A pena and culpa, for all your synne and offence.
> By the auctoryte, of pope Leo and pope Clement,
> Pope Bonyface, pope Pius, pope Johan and pope Innocent.
> And here I blesse ye, with a wynge of the holy ghost,
> From thonder to saue ye, and from spretes in euery coast
> Lo, here is a belle, to hange vpon your hogge,
> And saue your cattel, from bytynge of a dogge.
> So many as wyll come, to thye holy fraternyte,
> Come paye your moneye, and ye shall haue letters of me.

False Doctrine requests a letter, and Hypocrisy a bell. The Law of Christ denounces this conduct, and is at once fallen upon by False Doctrine, who denounces him as a teacher of the New Learning and a heretic. The Law of Christ can produce no letters of authority for his preaching, for he is "anoynted of God, but no popysh Antichrist." False Doctrine pushes his advantage:

Here I attache the, for a busye scysmatyke.
And wyll the accuse, for an haynouse heretyke.
Laye handes vpon hym, and depryue hym of thys aparel.

They overcome the Law of Christ, and rush him off to be burned at the stake. And Infidelitas closes the act with a recital of how the Law of Christ has been corrupted. In Act V, Deus Pater comes to the rescue of his three laws. Vindicta Dei, bristling with anger, informs Infidelitas that the hour for accounting has come. Infidelitas turns to his conjuring tricks as a defense against this rugged opponent:

Thu sprete of the ayre, I strayghtly coniure the here.
By panton and Craton, and charge the to com no nere.

His conjuring of no avail, Infidelitas tries bribery. Vindicta Dei replies by citing a long list of evil-doers who have felt the wrath of God. Then, Infidelitas becomes defiant, but that serves him no better. Finally, as a last resort, he attempts to place the blame on the shoulders of his lieutenants. But nothing can save him from his much-deserved punishment. For corrupting the Law of Nature, he is plagued with water: *hic Infidelitatem lympha percutit.* For corrupting the Law of Moses, the sword: *Gladio Infidelitatem denuo cedit.* And, for corrupting the Law of Christ, fire: *Ignis flamma Infidelitatem locum exire coget.* Infidelitas flees in flames, crying:

Credo, credo, credo, I saye, credo, credo, credo,
To the deuyll of hells, by the Messe I wene I go.

Deus Pater warns that he will destroy "All sectes of errour" that have risen out of that "inyquyte." The three laws are restored, and Christian Faith is appointed to rule the congregation. The play ends with a *songe vpon Benedictus,* and a résumé of the Ten Commandments.

Obviously Bale's *Three Laws* is basically a morality play. Professor Mackenzie interprets it as follows: "God has framed three laws for the guidance of man,—the law of nature to lead him in the paths of virtue, and the laws of Moses and Christ to instruct him in true religion and to bring him at last into heaven. These laws are proclaimed among men so that all may understand them. But the people are unfaithful to these laws. They practise unnatural vices and give themselves over to idolatry, thus perverting the law of nature; they are greedy and ambitious, and render the law of Moses of no avail; and by their hypocrisy and their leaning toward false beliefs they are led to forget the teachings of Christ. But eventually God will

appear in his wrath and will sweep away this unbelief which corrupts the hearts of men; and then his beneficent laws will be used for the guidance of the people."[6]

For some reason, Bale apparently intended the *Three Laws* for performance around the Christmas season. "God send a good new year" is the greeting of one of the characters in the drama. About a week before Christmas in 1551, Bale rehearsed his play as a part of the holiday exercises at Bishopstoke, in Hampshire.[7] In the play, the vice says:

> At Christmas and at Paske,
> Ye maye daunce the deuyll a maske,
> Whyle hys great cawdron plawe.[8]

Whether Bale designed his play as a substitute for some more popular holiday entertainment, such as the mummer's play, traces of which Sir Edmund Chambers has found in the sixteenth century, we cannot say.[9] Bale disliked such popular entertainments, as well as "popetly" plays, whose actors he characterized as players of lies, singers of bawdy songs, blasphemers of God, and corrupters of men's consciences.[10]

The *Three Laws* was, therefore, not only Bale's earliest attempt in the field of drama but it was also one of his strongest controversial pieces. It was probably the earliest play in English devoted exclusively to the Protestant cause. Hence, Bale's *Three Laws* may claim the doubtful honor of standing at the beginning of the controversial school of drama—a school which may be traced from the *Three Laws*, c. 1531, until almost the end of the century. And, as will be demonstrated in the proper place, Bale's influence all but dominated this sphere of drama.

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[6] Mackenzie, W. R., *The English Moralities*, 45–46.
[7] *Franticke papyst of Hamshyre*, Camden Soc., 77, 315 ff.
[8] *Three Laws*, 400–403, Schröer edition.
[9] Chambers, E. K., *The English Folk-Play*.
[10] *Epistel Exhortatorye*, from Schröer, A., *Anglia*, V, 234.

Chapter 14

BALE'S MORALITY-HISTORICAL PLAYS

In addition to the works already discussed, John Bale wrote a number of other plays in which he incorporated history into the morality formula, and, in doing this, he approached the historical drama, which became such a popular form of entertainment in England during the latter part of the sixteenth century. Among the extant dramas of Bale, there is only one specimen of this type. This is the famous *King John*.[1] "This play," says M. Legouis, "merits a particular place in the history of the theatre. It is the half-open chrysalis, the morality-play whence the historical drama is about to emerge."[2]

The main emphasis of the play is placed on the quarrel between King John and the Pope. King John opens the play with a statement of the Scriptural basis for the authority of princes, an account of his royal lineage, and an announcement of his intention to establish order and justice. Then, after Sedition blandly boasts that he has a place among all of the religious orders in the country, John resolves to deliver the widowed England from the evil agents of the Roman Church. To that end, he summons Nobility, Clergy, and Civil Order. They promise their cooperation. Clergy, however, shortly convinces Nobility that it is his duty to support the church. Meanwhile, Dissimulation and Sedition plot to bring the king to his knees. Dissimulation brings in Private Wealth and after him Usurped Power; they formulate a plot. Acting on the advice of Sedition (i.e., Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury), Usurped Power (i.e., the Pope) curses King John with cross, book, bell, and candle. Usurped Power has more powerful weapons in reserve. He dispatches his followers, now to be known as Stephen Langton, Pandulphus, and Raymundus, to their work—one to arouse the bishops, another to curse the king, and the third to urge the Christian princes to fall upon John with armed forces.[3] In Act II, Stephen Langton (Sedition)

[1] So far as is now known, the play of *King John* was never printed in Bale's own lifetime. After the final recasting in 1561, the play disappeared and nothing more was known of it until it was brought to light in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, "recovered," according to J. P. Collier (*History of English Dramatic Poetry*, II, 163), "from among some old papers, probably once belonging to the Corporation of Ipswich." The manuscript was bought by the Duke of Devonshire, but has since become a part of the collection of the Huntington Library, in California. [2] *A History of English Literature* (1931), 242.

[3] At this point, Bale, in the final revision, divided the original one-part play, and interpolated an Interpreter's speech.

grants Nobility and Civil Order absolution from obedience to John. Now Nobility, Clergy, and Civil Order are all allied with the Pope against King John. Private Wealth (in the dress of a Cardinal), as the messenger of the Pope, demands that John restore the goods of the church, recognize Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury, and bring back the exiled monks. But the king refuses to recognize Langton. As a result, Private Wealth (Cardinal) places King John under the interdict and absolves all of his subjects from obedience. Nobility, Civil Order, and Clergy scorn the king, and Commonality, who is too ignorant to be of use to the sovereign, is ordered by Pandulphus to join the rebels. Only the widowed England is loyal to John. At this point, news reaches John that King Philip of France is coming with a great army to overwhelm him. In this dangerous position, John surrenders the crown to Pandulphus, and receives it back under the most ruinous conditions imaginable. Sedition, not yet satisfied, plans to bring in Lewis, son of the French king, to harry John. Meanwhile, Dissimulation conceives the notion of making himself a martyr. Dissimulation in the guise of a monk, Simon of Swineshead, induces John to drink poison, although he himself must first test the potion. This is the end of King John, but not of the play. Imperial Majesty, entering the play for the first time, sets everything right again—overcomes Sedition, reforms the church, and banishes the Pope from England.

Although *King John* is basically of the morality type, it differs significantly from anything extant up to its date. It differs in two ways from the regular morality play. First, Bale's primary aim was to interpret the story of King John from the point of view of the New Learning. As has previously been indicated, this fits in with Bale's avowed intentions in his other works, especially with his efforts to bring about a re-writing of English history in conformity with the new movement. Consequently, Bale hit closer to the chronicle play than has generally been thought. That Bale consciously intended to write his play in this light is attested by the author in the course of his drama when he calls upon his friend, John Leland, the antiquary, to be witness to his interpretation:

> Yes, therfor Leylande, out of thy slumbre awake
> And wytnesse a trewthe, for thine owne countrye's sake.

His play, he tells us, confounds the lies of Polydore Vergil, the Italian whose English history was notoriously pro-Roman:

I assure ye, fryndes, lete men wryte what they wyll,
Kynge Johan was a man both valiaunt and godlye.
What though Polydorus reporteth hym yll
At the suggestyons of the malicyouse clergye,
Thynke yow a Romane with the Romans can not lye?

Hence, although Bale used the morality form in this play, it is quite clear that he intended, as far as the subject matter is concerned, to give a Protestant interpretation of a historical incident, in which the subject is treated in much the same way as he treated it in his account of Sir John Oldcastle. Writing in *Modern Language Notes*, in 1921, Mrs. Martin Boutillier attempted to show that Bale's *King John* was based on Holinshed's *Chronicle*, as was also the *Troublesome Raigne of King John*, and that the author of the latter play was indebted to Bale.[4] In a subsequent issue of the same journal, Mr. W. W. Greg demonstrated the impossibility of such a common source for the two plays, inasmuch as Bale's play was written long before Holinshed's *Chronicle*.[5]

Such influence as Bale exerted on the later plays about King John, in the light of evidence now available, was only of an indirect kind, for it is not likely that the authors of such works knew anything about Bale's manuscript play. Curiously enough, however, Bale's influence is reflected in the *Troublesome Raigne* and in William Shakespeare's *King John*, even though the authors of these dramas probably never heard of either Bale or his play. In another place, we have pointed out Bale's energetic demands for a reformed English history, and his indisputable influence on the chronicler, Edward Hall. Miss Ruth Wallerstein, who some years ago published a study entitled *King John in Fact and Fiction*, indicated a similar influence of Bale on Holinshed's *Chronicle History of England, Scotland, and Ireland*. "Holinshed's *Chronicle*," says Miss Wallerstein, "is the chief source of the two plays of the *Troublesome Raigne of King John*. The influence of Bale's *Kynge Johan* is very strong in directing the emphasis; in which current events (the play was written probably in 1589 or 1590) also shared. John is still in this play predominantly the Protestant martyr; the war with France and with the barons is subservient to this motive; the Catholic Church is lewdly handled; and much is made of John's poisoning. The French war is felt bitterly as one of the causes that forced John's submission to the Pope, an English king yielding to an Italian priest."[6] Speaking of Shakespeare's

[4] *Modern Language Notes*, XXXVI, 55–57. [5] *Ibid.*, 505.
[6] Wallerstein, R., *King John in Fact and Fiction*, 41.

King John, Miss Wallerstein says: "Shakespeare derived his plot for *King John* almost entirely from the *Troublesome Raigne*, welding the two early plays into a single drama, purged of everything unessential. The philosophy is his own, though the seeds of it are in Bale and Holinshed . . ."[7]

Although Miss Wallerstein's idea is suggestive, one may, under the circumstances, propose a slightly different explanation of the reflection of Bale's Protestantism in the later plays on King John. The current of religious thought in the sixteenth century, once it had cut a permanent channel near the Protestant shore, carried with it among other things many of the chroniclers, who were patriotic citizens. Bale, as we have previously shown, was one of the first to attempt to bring chronicle writing into this current, and he did exert some influence upon his contemporaries, notably Edward Hall. In the main, however, it was the trend of the times that influenced both the historians and the playwrights in their views. Hence, one must stop short of pointing to Bale as a direct influence upon the later playwrights who took an optimistic view of the notorious John. Rather, such reflections of Bale as are visible in these plays are reflections of a movement in the beginning of which he played an influential role. It is, nevertheless, significant that Bale's *King John*, though a full half century ahead of its time, is one with these more famous dramas in its interpretation of John's character. From this point of view, therefore, Bale's play, while a good bit less than the chronicle play as it later blossomed forth, is yet something more than a mere morality. Secondly, *King John* may be looked upon as pointing to the future in yet another way. Although primarily of the morality type, Bale's play felt, in a minor degree, the influence of the Christian-Terence plays which were prevalent in Germany and Holland. The influence of Thomas Kirchmayer's *Pammachius*, a Latin controversial play of the Christian-Terence type, on Bale's *King John* has long been suspected. But, the early date of Bale's play eliminates all possibility of any such influence in the original version.

Further in illustration of the point that Bale intended his play as a part of the contemporary campaign of the government against the abuses and superstitions of the Roman Church, we need only observe a few of the numerous references to contemporary events. His attack on images is in line with the government's move to abolish this

[7] *Ibid.*, 42.

practice, after the Injunctions of 1536.[8] Following these injunctions, a number of popular images were destroyed, notable among which were the blood of Hales, Our Lady's taper of Cardigan, the great Sibyl of Worcester, the rood of Boxley, and Darvell Gatheren. These images were all destroyed, with appropriate ceremony, in the city of London. The most noted, perhaps, of the many images thus destroyed was that of Darvell Gatheren, from Wales. This image was taken up to London, where it was chopped up and used for fuel to burn one Friar Forrest, who had refused to renounce his old religion, in 1538.[9] Bale refers to some of these images in the following passage from *King John:*

> Here ys fyrst a bone of the Blyssyd Trynyte;
> A dram of the tord of swete Seynt Barnabe:
> Here ys a fedder of good Seynt Myhelles wyng;
> A toth of Seynt Twyde; a pece of Davyds harpe-stryng;
> The good blood of Haylys; and Owr Blyssyd Ladys mylke;
> A lowse of Seynt Frauncis in this same crymsen sylke;
> A scabbe of Seynt Job; a nayle of Adams too;
> A maggot of Moyses; with a fart of Saynt Fandigo;
> Here is a fygge-leafe and a grape of Noes vyneyearde;
> A bede of Saynt Blythe; with the bracelet of a berewarde;
> The devyll that was hatcht in Maistre Johan Shornes bote,
> That the tree of Jesse did plucke up by the roote;
> Here ys the lachett of swett Seynt Thomas shewe;
> A rybbe of Seynt Rabart; with the huckyll-bone of a Jewe;
> Here is a joynt of Darvell Cathyron;
> Besydes other bonys and relyckes many one.

The heart of the play, which is built around the quarrel of King John and the Pope, is a direct analogy to the contemporary controversy between Henry VIII and Pope Clement VII. As such, the play was meant to drive home the lesson carried away from the performance at Archbishop Cranmer's house, in 1539, by young John Alforde, who reported that it would be a pity "that the Bisshop of Rome should reigne any lenger, for if he should, the said Bisshop wold do with our King as he did with King John."[10] In like manner, the revolt of the "three estates" against John may very well be a reflection of the Lincolnshire Rebellion and the Pilgrimage of Grace, in 1536–37. Certainly, the methods used by Imperial Majesty (gen-

[8] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 180. (See also, Green, *Short History of the English People* (Everyman), I, 320.

[9] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 180. See, also, *D.N.B.*, VII, p. 436.

[10] Parker Society, vol. 19, p. 388.

erally recognized as Henry VIII) to hoodwink Sedition (ll. 2421 ff.) must recall the remarkable interview between King Henry VIII and the leader of the Northern Rebellion, Robert Aske, who was most thoroughly duped by the king.

A letter of Henry VIII summoned Aske to court to discuss the demands of the rebels. "When he (Aske) arrived where the King was, as soon as the King saw him he rose up, and throwing his arms around him said aloud that all might hear: 'Be ye welcome, my good Aske; it is my wish that here, before my Council, you ask what ye desire and I will grant it.' Aske answered, 'Sir, your Majesty allows yourself to be governed by a tyrant named Cromwell. Everyone knows if it had not been for him the seven thousand poor priests I have in my company would not be ruined wanderers as they are now. They must have enough to live upon, for they have no handicraft.' Then the King with a smiling face and words full of falseness, took from his neck a great chain of gold, and threw it around Aske's neck, saying to him: 'I promise thee, thou art wiser than anyone thinks, and from this day forward I make thee one of my Council.' And then on the spot he ordered a thousand pounds sterling to be given to him, and promised him the same amount every year as long as he lived.

"The unhappy Aske, carried away with the chain and the thousand pounds and grant of annual income, was quite won over, and the King said to him, 'Now return to the north, and get your people to disperse and go to their houses, and I will grant a general pardon for all'."[11] Henry further flattered Aske by giving him a "jacket of crimson satin."[12] A few months later, after the King had regained the upper hand in the North, Aske was arrested, and condemned to be hanged and quartered for his part in the rebellion.

This inveigling of Aske by Henry VIII resembles very closely the method used by Imperial Majesty (Henry VIII) with Sedition, in the play. After Imperial Majesty has received the apologies of the 'three estates' for their part in the rebellion, Sedition, the leader, comes upon the stage. "Ye shall see," says Nobility, "how we shall catche hym by a wyle."[13] (It will be remembered that the King's purpose in summoning the traitor, Robert Aske, was likewise to "catche hym by a wyle.") Imperial Majesty, following Henry's method to the letter, welcomes Sedition: "Ah, brother, art thu cum?

[11] Dodds, M. H., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, II, 36–37.
[12] *Letters and Papers*, XII, 1224. [13] *King John*, 2424.

I am ryght glad we have thee."[14] Then, Imperial Majesty offers pardon to Sedition, if he will tell the truth, "Aryse, I perdon the, so that thu tell the trewthe,"[15] just as Henry VIII gave Aske "a token of pardon for confessing the truth."[16] Thereupon, in the same manner in which Henry VIII inveigled Aske into giving a full account of his part in the rebellion, Imperial Majesty encourages Sedition to tell all that he knows:

> It may holde no treason, I tell the verelye,
> And therefore tell the whole matter by-and-bye.

With this incentive, Sedition, like Aske, tells all—only, the miserable Aske wrote his in black and white to stand in witness against him. In the course of his confession, Sedition refers to the King's Injunctions for teaching God's word:

> Ye gave injunctyons that Gods wurde myghte be taught;
> But who observe them? Full manye a tyme have I laught
> To see the conveyaunce that prelates and priestes can fynde.[17]

This is an allusion to the King's Injunctions of June, 1536: "Also, in the same their sermons and other collations, the parsons, vicars, and other curates aforesaid, shall diligently admonish the fathers and mothers, masters and governors of youth being within their cure, to teach or cause to be taught, their children and servants, even from their infancy, the 'Paternoster,' the Articles of our Faith, and the Ten Commandments in their mother-tongue . . ."[18] Bale's attempt to enforce these injunctions, it will be recalled, was one of the chief causes of his ejection from his living at Thorndon, in 1537. Further, in his confession, Sedition alludes directly to the Northern rebellion:

> For, if that were knowne, than woulde the people regarde
> No heade but their prynce; with the Churche than were it harde;
> Than shoulde I lacke helpe to maynteyne their estate,
> As I attempted in the Northe but now of late,
> And sens that same tyme in other places besyde,
> Tyll my setters-on were of their purpose wyde.
> A vengeaunce take it, it was neuer well with me
> Sens the cummynge hyther of that same Veryte![19]

After Sedition has related these matters, and other facts reflecting the contemporary situation, Imperial Majesty demonstrates the insincerity of his promise by commanding Civil Order to take him

[14] *Ibid.*, 2448. [15] *Ibid.*, 2462.
[16] Dodds, M. H., *op. cit.* [17] *King John*, 2473–75.
[18] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 166. See, also, Green, *Short History*, I, 320.
[19] *King John*, 2477–84.

(Sedition) out and hang him, and stick his head up on London Bridge. The unfortunate Robert Aske, it will be remembered, who had likewise pinned his hopes upon the false promise of his imperial majesty, Henry VIII, had been executed at York, on July 12, 1537.[20] Like the Sedition of Bale's play, the leader of the Pilgrimage of Grace learned all too late that potentates who draw their power and authority from God direct are not bound by mere promises.

After disposing of Sedition, Imperial Majesty lets it be known that he has no more use for religious sects other than his own than he has for Popish sects:

> The Anabaptystes, a secte newe risen of late,
> The Scriptures poyseneth with their subtle allegoryes,
> The heades to subdue after a sedicyouse rate.
> The cytie of Mynster was lost through their debate.
> They have here begunne their pestilent sedes to sowe,
> But we trust in God, to increace they shall not growe.[21]

The sect of the Anabaptists captured the city of Münster in 1532, and held it until June 24, 1535.[22] It is worthy of passing note that Bale's hatred of Catholics did not grow out of any desire on his part for religious toleration.

Numerous other reflections of the contemporary movement against things Roman Catholic might be cited from Bale's *King John*, but enough has been indicated to illustrate the point in question. Although Bale went back some three hundred years for his subject, it is obvious that he wrote his play entirely in the light of contemporary events. It is the foremost Protestant play of the age, and may well mark Bale as the dramatist of the New Learning. *King John*, however, is not Bale's only effort to use historical material in the making of Reformation plays. The following two plays, although now non-extant, were evidently of this type: "*On the King's Two Marriages*," and "*Impostures of Thomas à Becket.*" Both these plays were recorded by Bale in the earliest group of his dramatic compositions, and were written for the Earl of Oxford.[23] Both titles reflect the contemporary movements in the English state. One of the great questions of the time was that of the King's divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and his marriage to a second, Anne Boleyn. Inasmuch as a third marriage followed closely upon the execution of the second wife, Anne Boleyn, in May, 1536, it is obviously true

[20] Dodd, M. H., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, II, 223. [21] *King John*, 2591–96.
[22] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, I, 857–58. [23] *Anglorum Heliades*, 112.

that Bale's play was written during the heat of the debate on the legitimacy of the second marriage of Henry VIII. The play on Thomas Becket likewise reflects the contemporary movement, which saw the bones of Becket "torn from the stately shrine which had been the glory of his metropolitan church, and his name erased from the service books as that of a traitor."[24] Other plays in Bale's list which probably dealt with contemporary events are: "*Against scoffers and backbiters*," "*On sects among the papists*," "*The treacheries of the papists*," and "*Against the Adulterators of God's Word*."

Bale's *King John*, therefore, and the other plays of this group, were the products of an impulse given by the bitter religious and political struggle of the Cromwellian period of the English Reformation. Hence, as a playwright, Bale's name must rank in literature on about the same level as those of Turner, Fishe, and other outstanding pamphleteers of the Reformation movement. As a dramatist Bale has been characterized by Sir Edmund Chambers as "very largely original."[25] This does not mean, of course, that Bale possessed any great original genius. His originality lies in the field of *application* rather than in that of *invention*. Most of the elements of his plays had existed from time out of mind. The game of pricking the false bubbles of sanctimonious hypocrisy had been a favorite sport for ages, going back to *Piers Plowman* and beyond. With the coming of the Reformation, however, the nature of these attacks changed. Hitherto the attacks had come from within the Roman fold, and were rather general in form. Now, they came from without, and were individualized. It is only natural that such an effective agency of propaganda as the stage should be adapted to practical use by the party of the New Learning. Bale happened to be the man who led the way in the work of fitting the old drama to new ends.

[24] Green, J. R., *Short History*, I, 333.
[25] Chambers, E. K., *Mediaeval Stage*, II, 224.

Chapter 15

ACTING OF THE PLAYS

After observing the nature and purpose of Bale's plays, it is interesting to note what actual use he or others made of them in the Reformation struggle. This necessitates some observation of Bale's connections during the period of his dramatic activity from c. 1534 to 1540. As previously pointed out, in 1534 Bale was called before Edward Lee, Archbishop of York, and examined upon the articles of honoring and praying to saints.[1] Later Stokesley, Bishop of London, also examined him. These incidents introduce Thomas Cromwell for the first time into the story of Bale, for Cromwell saved Bale first from Lee, then from Stokesley, *ob editas comedias*.[2] Since the incident with Archbishop Lee occurred in 1534, it follows that Cromwell's intercession must have come about that date also.

About this same date, Bale came into contact with John Vere, the first Protestant Earl of Oxford. He was hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain of England, and a useful instrument of the king's cause, having taken a prominent part against Wolsey and Queen Catherine.[3] His fortunes were closely allied with those of Anne Boleyn, at whose coronation in 1533 he bore the crown.[4] The Earl of Oxford, who supported a company of players, apparently saw an opportunity in Bale's plays to spread the doctrine of the New Learning. Writing in 1536, Bale stated that he had composed in vulgar idiom various comedies and tragedies for John Vere, Earl of Oxford.[5] There are fourteen plays in this group, including the extant *Three Laws* and *King John*.

It was in this manner that Bale came to be known to the leaders of the new movement in religion, and, as pointed out, it was "on account of his comedies" that Cromwell became his protector. Obviously Cromwell recognized the possibilities offered by the stage in furthering his various schemes, for, as has already been indicated, he made use of many and varied devices to influence public opinion.[6]

After his release from prison c. 1537, Bale's work as a dramatist

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[1] See p. 24.

[2] Exutus fortunis omnibus, ex concione ad tribunalia mox trahebar, Eboraci primùm sub Laeo, Londini postea sub Stokisleyo: sed pius Cromvelus, qui regi Henrico ab intimis erat, ob editas comoedias me semper liberauit. See *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 702.

[3] Wriothesley, C., *Chronicle of England* (1877), 18. [4] *Ibid.*

[5] Bale, J., *Anglorum Heliades*, 112. [6] See p. 27.

became more prominent. He revised his original series of dramas and perhaps added new ones at that time in preparation for an active campaign. In the list set down by Bale in 1536, there are fourteen titles.[7] This list was later expanded to twenty-one.[8] Of the latter, five survived, none of them dating later than 1538, and at least two of them, *King John* and the *Three Laws*, are in the original group of fourteen.[9] During this period, therefore, all the extant plays of our author were either revised or newly written for stage presentation. Thus, the plays of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation*, in their present forms, first came into being. *King John* was recast or entirely written anew into a one-piece play suitable for stage presentation.[10] The *Three Laws* was also revised. This is indicated by the fact that on the title-page of the original printed copy of the play it is stated that it was "compyled" in 1538, and by allusions to Darvell Gatheren and other images destroyed in that year.

This revising of old plays and composing of new ones is indicative of preparation on Bale's part for active participation as a stage propagandist of the New Learning. This participation was undertaken by Bale under the patronage of Thomas Cromwell, who had saved him from the wrath of Bishop Stokesley. For the presentation of his revised list of plays, Bale organized a company of "fellows," which was active in 1538 and 1539. In September, 1538, Thomas Cromwell paid Bale and his company the sum of 40 shillings for a performance at St. Stephens beside Canterbury.[11] In comparison to what Cromwell habitually gave players for their work, this was a very princely remuneration. In his accounts for 1538, there are payments of 7s. 6d. to the children of the Chapel, of 20s. to the Lord Warden's players, 20s. to the Duke of Suffolk's players, 20s. to Lord Cobham's players, 20s. to "Robyn Drowme" and his fellows, 22s. 6d. to "Mr. Hopton's priest, for playing before my Lord with his children," and so on.[12] The performance by Bale's players on September 8, 1538, was evidently before Cromwell himself; for it will be noted that the entry in Cromwell's accounts states that the payment was made by the commandment of "my lord," that is Cromwell, and that the

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[7] Bale, J., *op. cit.* [8] *Idem.*, *Illustrium . . . Summarium*, 244.

[9] For discussion of the possibility that the other extant plays of Bale may also be revisions of earlier forms, see pp. 76–77. [10] See p. 71.

[11] "Balle and his ffelowes The same daye (8 Sept. 1538) gyven to them by my lorde cõmaundement at saynt Stephens besyde Caunterbury for playing before my lorde—xl^{s}." From J. H. P. Pafford's "Introduction" to *King John*, Malone Society, 1931.

[12] *Letters and Papers*, XIV, 329 ff.

playing was likewise done before "my lord."[13] Hence, it is clear that Bale's venture as the proprietor of what appears to have been a professional company of players was smiled upon by the man who next to the king wielded more power than any other individual in the kingdom. The purpose of Bale, however, was that of the evangelist. He preached to his audiences under the guise of dramatic entertainment.

The following year, January, 1539, Cromwell rewarded Bale and his fellows with 30 shillings, for a performance before "my lord."[14] Apparently again the statement means that the company performed before Cromwell himself. Another notable performance by Bale and his company occurred during Christmas time of 1539. About eight or nine o'clock at night, they presented *King John*, at Archbishop Cranmer's house, at Canterbury.[15] One Thomas Browne, a man of fifty years of age, who witnessed the performance, reported that it was "one of the best matiers that ever he sawe, touching King John."[16] The play convinced Browne that King John was "as noble a prince as ever was in England."[17] An eighteen-year-old youth named John Alforde, who was in the audience, said that it would be a pity "that the Bisshop of Rome should reigne any lenger, for if he should, the said Bisshop wold do with our King as he did with King John."[18] Not everyone in the audience at Cranmer's house, however, was so favorably impressed as were Browne and Alforde. Cranmer solemnly reports that certain priests and clerks did say not once but many times that "King John did loke like one that hadd run frome brynnyng of a house."[19]

The above are the three outstanding and recorded instances of actual performance during this two-year period. Everything known about the matter indicates that Bale's work as a dramatist of the new order in religion was not only well known but appreciated by those in high place in affairs of state. Furthermore, the revision and supplementing of his list of plays, the organization of a company of

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[13] The entries were made by Cromwell's clerk or secretary.

[14] "Bale & his ffelowes The last of Ianuary (1539) gyven to him & his ffelowes for playing before my lorde—xxx^{s}." See J. H. P. Pafford's "Introduction" to *King John*, Malone Society, 1931.

[15] Parker Society, vol. 19, p. 388.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] The relation between the performance at Cranmer's house at Christmas time, 1539, and that paid for by Cromwell the last of January, 1539, is not clear. Possibly, after Cranmer's report, January 11, 1539, of the play, Cromwell himself may have been moved to see such a remarkable matter concerning King John. If so, it is obvious that he found the interpretation to his liking.

players, and the performances recorded above, all shadow forth something of Bale's activity during this period of his career. In the light of all the evidence, it may be assumed that his company gave many other performances that are not recorded. There are reasonable grounds for believing, as pointed out by Pafford, that the company traceable in the records of 1537–38 as Cromwell's own may have been that of Bale. Although a more numerous series of incidents such as those cited above would add greatly to the picture of Bale as the official playwright of the Cromwellian period of the English Reformation, he, nevertheless, has the best claim to that title. It seems, therefore, probable that the whole list of Bale's plays, in its revised form, may be considered a part of the campaign of Thomas Cromwell to popularize the religious ideas of the new order.

The execution in 1540 of Thomas Cromwell put an end to Bale's career as a playwright-propagandist. He fled to foreign shores to escape persecution. The plays were performed again at various times in after years, but never as part of a great and well-planned movement. However, he never lost faith in his plays as effective propaganda devices.

It has sometimes been conjectured that Bale's *King John* was performed during the coronation festivities of Edward VI, which was held on February 20, 1547. This supposition is based on the statement by Bale that he was recalled from abroad by Edward VI, and on two items in the Revels accounts that might apply to the play. These items read:

1. "a greate past burde gyldyd wth ffyne golde for making of Crownes & Crosse for the poope (var. lec. a B. of Rome) in playe.
2. "iij Cappes of Crimsin & black Satten for preste in pley."[20]

In 1552, Bale rehearsed his *Three Laws* at Bishopstoke, Hampshire, for a performance. A local priest disliked the idea, and compelled a servant, who had a part in the drama, to learn instead a passage in which our author was called heretic and knave.[21] And, as indicated in another place, Bale, in the early 1530's, exhibited a dramatic piece, probably his *Three Laws*, containing a parody creed in English.[22] This performance was given, it seems, in a church.[23]

The incident has already been told of how in Ireland Bale's cycle of plays was performed on the day of Queen Mary's coronation.[24] On

[20] Feuillerat, A., *Revels of Edward and Mary* (1914), 6.
[21] Bale, J., *An Expostulation, etc.*, Camden Society, Vol. 77, p. 315.
[22] See p. 69. [23] *Ibid.* [24] See p. 45.

this occasion, the Market Cross at Kilkenny was the place of rendition; music and songs were used as accompaniments to the acting.[25] The cycle was played by what Bale calls the "yonge men," with one play in the morning and the other two in the afternoon.[26]

King John was possibly revived for performance on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Ipswich, in August, 1561. As previously indicated, Bale revised the play about this time.[27] That he revised it for acting seems probable. And the fact that "the prayer at the end is for Elizabeth" lends plausibility to the supposition that the play was staged as part of the entertainment for the Queen.[28] Furthermore, the surviving version of *King John* is said by Collier to have been recovered "from among some old papers, probably once belonging to the Corporation of Ipswich."[29] Although there is no evidence of an actual performance, the facts stated above make it not at all improbable that the drama was presented before Elizabeth in 1561. It would have been a very satisfactory conclusion to John Bale's career as a dramatist.

It may be observed also that Bale's activity as a working playwright of the Reformation falls into line with developments which had long been in the making in English drama. His work for the Earl of Oxford and his success in winning the notice and patronage of Thomas Cromwell testify to his desire to win the protection of a patron in high place. "Like other minstrels, the players put themselves under the protection of nobles and persons of honour. The earliest upon record are those of Henry Bourchier, earl of Essex, and those of Richard, duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard the Third. Both companies were rewarded by Lord Howard in 1482. The earls of Northumberland, Oxford, Derby, and Shrewsbury, and Lord Arundel, all had their players before the end of the century."[30] In common with other interlude players also, Bale could stage one of his plays in a variety of places—a great man's house, a church, at the market cross, etc. And in conformity with the general trend of the times, Bale developed his dramas so that they could be presented in a short period of time and by a very small company of actors. Speaking of this phase of dramatic development, Sir Edmund Chambers says: "The typical interlude deals with a short episode in about a thousand lines, and could be handled in the hour or so which the

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[25] Bale, J., *Vocacyon*, 345. [26] *Ibid.* [27] See p. 71.
[28] Chambers, E. K., *The Mediaeval Stage*, II, 450. [29] Collier, J. P., *Kynge Johan*, vi.
[30] Chambers, E. K., *op. cit.*, 186.

lord might reasonably be expected to spare from his horse and his hounds. Economy in traveling and the inconvenience of crowding the hall both went to put a limit on the number of actors. Four men and a boy, probably in apprenticeship to one of them, for the women's parts, may be taken as a normal troupe."[31] Thus, Bale's *God's Promises* is so arranged that it could be done by two people, the *Three Laws* by five players, and the nineteen parts of *King John* by nine actors.

In conclusion, it may be observed that Bale's career as a dramatist and as a play-promoter represents fairly well the steps in the growth of the individual dramatic producer of his times. First, he wrote plays for the Earl of Oxford, and for his own parishioners. On two occasions at least, he produced dramas of his own composition for the benefit of the people of his own church. Attracting the attention of Thomas Cromwell, Bale for a time became sponsor of a professional troupe, playing before both Cromwell and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer. For this work, he was paid from the royal treasury. To meet professional needs, he, like contemporary writers of interludes, found it necessary to restrict his plays both as to length and as to number of parts for actors. Finally, he had some of his dramas published for public use. In some respects, Bale is representative of the tendency to shift play-making and acting from non-professional to professional hands—a tendency which never became a dominant influence until the days of Marlowe and Shakespeare.[32]

[31] *Ibid.*, 188. [32] *Ibid.*, 192.

Chapter 16

THE BALE SCHOOL

Although Bale was *the* dramatist of the New Learning, he was far from being the lone writer of controversial plays during the Cromwellian period. Before closing this brief sketch we must note a few of Bale's contemporaries in the drive to make England Protestant-conscious. In 1537, Thomas Wylley, vicar of Yoxford, in Suffolk, wrote to inform Cromwell that he had been banned from preaching in most of the churches of Suffolk after he had made a play "against the Pope's councillors, Error, Colle Clogger of Conscience, and Incredulity."[1] Wylley had also "made" a drama to be played by six children, "representing Christ, the Word of God, Paul, Austyn, a child, a nun called Ignoransy, as a secret thing that shall have his end once rehearsed afore your eye by the said children."[2] This busy "maker" had also composed a play called a *Rude Commonality;*[3] and, he adds, "I am amaking of another called the *Woman on the Rock*, in the fire of faith affyning and apurging in the true purgatory, never to be seen but of your Lordship's eye."[4] It is quite evident that the vicar intended to make himself useful to the cause of Cromwell, but what, if anything, came of his labors, we do not know. One of the most interesting of these obscure dramatists is Ralph Radclif, the schoolmaster of Hichen, about whose stage, plays, and performances Bale waxed enthusiastic.[5] Radclif established his school at Hichen in 1538, in a building which had formerly been the property of the Carmelite Friars. "*Mihi quidem aliquot dies in unis & eisdem aedibus commoranti*," says Bale, "*multa arriserunt: eáque etiam laude dignissima.*"[6] Bale was delighted with the stage which Radclif had provided in his school, upon which the schoolboys performed various comedies and tragedies of the master's own composition. The nature of these plays may be surmised from the titles, a few of which read: "*De Sodomae incendio*," "*De Io. Hussi damnatione*," "*De Ionae defectione*," "*De Iudith fortitudine*," "*De Iobi afflictionibus.*"[7]

As previously pointed out, makers of plays favorable to the new movement in religion appear to have been numerous during this period. Their activity, however, was rudely interrupted with the execution of Thomas Cromwell in 1540, and the predominance in the

[1] *Letters and Papers*, XII, 244. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*
[5] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 700. [6] *Ibid.* [7] *Ibid.*

Council of the conservative party. But, as late as 1542, one Moryson proposed to the king as a yearly memorial to devise plays which would "declare lively before the people's eyes the abomination and wickedness of the Bishop of Rome, monks, friars, nuns, and such like, and to declare the obedience due to the king."[8] This was perhaps Richard Morison, whom Bale mentions as being in favor with the King (Henry VIII) and later with Edward VI.[9] In 1541, a priest was "burned at Salisbury, who, leaving his papistry, had married a wife, and become a player in interludes."[10] This same year, at Shoreditch, London, "Shermons, keeper of the Carpenters' Hall in Christ's parish, was presented for procuring an interlude to be openly played, wherein priests were railed on, and called knaves."[11] In 1543, Bale protested against the persecution of interlude players, who were trying to present the truth in religion—i.e., according to the Protestant viewpoint.[12]

Persecution, however, failed to wipe out altogether the Protestant drama, and it enjoyed a revival when Edward VI came to the throne in 1547. Bale himself had some of his plays printed in the same year that Edward ascended the throne, and, as previously pointed out, it is thought that his *King John* may have been acted as part of the coronation celebration, on February 20, 1547.[13]

In a series of letters to the Lord Protector, in 1547, the conservative Stephen Gardiner, who had been one of the leading counsellors in opposition to the New Learning, made a strong protest against this fresh outbreak of the playwrights. On May 21, 1547, Gardiner wrote, "Certain printers, players, and preachers, make a wonderment, as though we knew not yet how to be justified, nor what sacraments we should have."[14] Of these makers of wonderments, he mentions Bale by name. "What rhymes," Gardiner continues, "be set forth to deprave the Lent, . . . and yet the people pay money for them."[15] In answer to Article eleven of the charges brought against him, in part he said, " . . . notwithstanding players, jesters, rhymers, balladmakers, did signify me to be the *true* catholic faith . . ."[16]

As previously pointed out, when Bale returned from the continent in 1547 or 1548 he fell into close association with John Foxe, and ap-

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[8] *Letters and Papers*, XVII, 707. [9] Bale, J., *op. cit.*, 693.
[10] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 443. See, also, Chambers, E. K., *Mediaeval Stage*, II, 221. [11] Foxe, J., *op. cit.*, 446. See Chambers, E. K., *Mediaeval Stage*, II, 221.
[12] Bale, J., *Epistel Exhortatorye*, 234. [13] See Part II, p. 103.
[14] Foxe J., *op. cit.*, VI, 30–34. See, also, Muller, J., *Stephen Gardiner*, 151.
[15] *Ibid.* [16] *Ibid.*, VI, 71.

parently with John Ponet, who was to succeed Gardiner in the bishopric of Winchester.[17] During this period, he and Foxe lived together in the house of Marie, Duchess of Richmond. Both Foxe and Ponet became interested in the composition of plays. Foxe had written, or was soon to write, his *Christus Triumphans*, which is in the *Pammachius* tradition. And in 1549 Ponet translated from the Italian a play with the suggestive title of the *Bishop of Rome*. A fourth member of this group was John Cheke. His relation to Bale, Leland, and Foxe, we have already pointed out.[18] The hints we have concerning the association of this group, and their mutual interest in plays, offer some interesting possibilities, but these are points which must wait for a more detailed investigation.

In this same period, R. Wever, "a disciple of Bale," wrote his *Lusty Juventus*.[19] The character "God's Merciful Promises" of this play "deutlich der Baleschen Allegorie God's Promises nachgebildet ist."[20] Further, the characters Hypocrisy and Sodomismus were perhaps modeled after characters of the same names in Bale's *Three Laws*.[21] One of the chief purposes of *Lusty Juventus* was to promote the ideals of the New Learning. It is likewise, however, a play of the "roistering youth" kind, and as such reaches back to the anonymous *Hycke-scorner* (c. 1527–28).

In 1551, Bale revived his *Three Laws* for a performance at Bishopstoke, in Hampshire. And, on the day of Queen Mary's coronation, he had performed at Kilkenny, in Ireland, his cycle of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation*. The coming of Mary practically put an end to the activity of Protestant playwrights in England. There is one surviving Catholic play, the anonymous *Respublica*, which dates from Mary's reign.[22] *Respublica* is a controversial play, written on the model of the Terentian comedies.

On Elizabeth's ascension to the throne, the Protestant drama enjoyed a slight revival. A Calvinistic play, *New Custom* (c. 1560) is in the Bale tradition: " . . . hier kehre aus den 'Three Laws' wider die guten Figuren Evangelium (als Light of the Gospel) und Fides Christiana (als Assurance, a virtue), und die bösen: Hypocrisy, Avaritia, Pseudodoctrina (als Perverse Doctrine)."[23] In this same year, Bale revised his *King John* for presentation before Queen Elizabeth, perhaps at Ipswich, on her visit there in August, 1561. This revision

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[17] See Part I, 38. [18] *Ibid.* [19] Schelling, F. E., *Elizabethan Playwrights*, 24.
[20] Brandl, A., *Quellen des weltlichen Dramas*, LXIV. [21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Ibid.*, 281 ff. [23] *Ibid.*, LXIV.

is indicated by the passage which begins: "Englande hath a quene."[24]

In the Bale tradition, also, are the Elizabethan plays, *The Triall of Treasure* (1556–61), and W. Wager's *The Longer thou livest, the more Fool thou art*, (c. 1559). In the former, Bale's Vindicta Dei (from the *Three Laws*) appears as God's Visitation, and in the latter as God's Judgment. To these, we may add the curious play of *King Darius* (c. 1565), which shows some evidence of Bale's influence. In part, like Bale's plays, *King Darius* sets forth that "the lord loketh vpon faithe and beholdeth it indede."[25] The play was printed in 1565 by Thomas Colwell, who had published Bale's *Three Laws* some three years earlier.

The gradual settlement of the religious problems in the reign of Elizabeth eliminated the need for plays of the Bale type. Only the growing momentum of Puritanism in the beginning of the next century revived vague echoes of Bale's plays, through the writings of William Prynne, who looked favorably on them in contrast to those of his own contemporaries.[26] Puritanism, however, was opposed to stage-plays, and Bale was not revived. There must be one exception to this: the single play of *King John*, which, as M. Legouis puts it, is "the half-open chrysalis" from which the historical drama "is about to emerge." As with so many other things which he stumbled upon, Bale seemed to realize vaguely that he was doing something that was new when he cast a morality play on the background of history in *King John*, but he struggled like a man in the dark, bound in the chains of Middle Age dramatic formulae. From this humble beginning, nevertheless, we have the germ of the historical drama, which grew to such large proportions in the latter part of the century. Historically, in the field of dramatic literature, therefore, Bale occupies a firmly established niche—a niche which many writers of greater intrinsic worth can never attain.

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[24] As late as 1931, a commentator, C. van der Spek, of Amsterdam, says of the concluding speech of *King John:* "The prayer for Queen Elizabeth is a later addition by an unknown author." *Church and the Churchman in English Dramatic Literature*, fn., p. 39. The passage is in Bale's own hand, and was added by the author when he made the final revision c. 1561. See J. H. P. Pafford, *King John.*

[25] *King Darius*, line 375 (Brandl edition).

[26] Prynne, W., *Histriomastix* (1633), 834.

PART III
BALE'S WORKS IN GENERAL

Chapter 17
LITERARY HISTORY

With a few miscellaneous exceptions, Bale's works, other than his plays, may be classified as literary history, chronicle history, and controversial pamphlets. In each of these fields, Bale exerted considerable influence in his own age. He was the first historian of English literature. Partly through his suggestion and influence, the chronicle history was revised from its Romish coloring to one of Protestant leaning. And, as a controversialist, he had no equal in vituperation and abuse. First, let us note his work as an historian of literature.

Bale's works in this field, most of which are in Latin, extend in time from his residence among the Carmelites (1509–1533) until the publication of his last catalogue in 1559. His apprenticeship for this work he got while a resident among the Carmelite Friars at Norwich and elsewhere; several manuscripts are still extant from this period of his labors. These manuscripts, which have never been published, deal almost exclusively with the history of his order, especially with the noted men who had been members of that order. Of his numerous productions, these are the least reprehensible, and, in some ways, perhaps the most valuable. The noted Catholic historian Cardinal Gasquet, pays a much deserved tribute to Bale as the preserver of this information so important in the history of the English Carmelites. "It is remarkable," Gasquet says, "how prolific the English Carmelites were in writers, although it is not impossible that their number was not really greater than those of the Franciscans or Dominicans. These latter orders, however, lacked a Bale;—for even Bale has a redeeming point in his literary character. Whilst it was yet possible, he gathered up with scrupulous care the memorials of his order in England, and thus showed, in spite of violence and virulence of speech and pen, that there was somewhere in his heart a tenderness for the men of his old habit."[1] Most of these works date from his period as a member of the Carmelites, if we may judge from

[1] Gasquet, C., *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, 311–12.

the heading of the list of the first twenty titles in his *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus: "Ex diuersarum terrarum bibliothecis, dum adhuc Papistarum Babylone mersarer, collegi ac scripsi, Latinè."*[2] One of the most notable of these manuscripts, *Perpaucorum Carmeli scriptorum*, was composed, at the urging of John Leland, in 1536, after Bale's desertion of the Carmelites.[3] This consists of a considerable list of writers, together with a biography of each, and a list of writings. This is the method uniformly used by Bale throughout his catalogues. Hence, the best and least selfish of his efforts came as a result of his training and inspiration among the Carmelite brothers.

This early training in the preservation of the literary monuments of his country led to the one consistent and admirable passion of a life otherwise filled with bitterness and disillusionment. Selfish and unscrupulous men of Bale's own party were destroying in the most wanton manner the greatest literary storehouses of the country. It is to Bale's credit that he was able to rise above his bitter and deep-seated hatred of the monastic orders to protest against this blind vandalism. He declared:

> If there had bene in euery shyre of Englande, but one solemyne lybrarye, to the preservacyon of those noble workes, and preferrement of good lernynges in oure posteryte, it had bene yet sumwhat. But to destroye all without consyderacyon, is and wyll be vnto Englande for euer, a moste horryble infamy amonge the graue senyours of other nacyons. A greate nombre of them whych purchased those superstycyouse mansyons, reserued of those lybrarye bokes, some to serue theyr iakes, some to scoure theyr candelstyckes, and some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sope sellers, & some they sent ouersee to the bokebynders, not in small nombre, but at tymes whole shyppes full, to the wonderynge of the foren nacyons. Yea, the vnyuersytees of thys realme, are not all clere in this detestable fact . . . I knowe a merchaunt man, whych shall at thys tyme be nameless, that boughte the contentes of two noble lybraryes for xl. shyllynges pryce, a shame it is to be spoken. Thys stuffe hath he occupyed in the stede of graye paper by the space of more than these x. yeares, and yet hath store ynough for as many yeares to come. A prodygyouse example is this, and to be abhorred of all men which loue their nacyon as they shoulde do.[4]

Bale was an enthusiastic lover of books, and it is not hard to understand his chagrin at this brutal rape of the monastic libraries. In this same spirit, he went about collecting materials for his catalogues. In order fully to appreciate the magnitude of his task and to under-

[2] Bale, J., *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, 703. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] Bale's *Preface* to *Leland's New Year's Gift* (1895), 18 ff.

stand the shortcomings in his collections, we shall now follow briefly his steps in gathering and putting together the materials of his catalogues.

This first historian of English literature was faced by great difficulties. He often had to depend upon information supplied by others. "Yf any man," he says in advertising his purpose, "louing the learned fame of their nacyon, do know of more learned wryters than I haue here, & in my other boke named (as it is not in my power to trauayle in all quarters) yf they in season sende me the names, tymes tytles, nombres, and beginninges of theyr workes, I wyl registre them, as I haue done those."[5] He was also interested in contemporary writers. "The same wyll I do also," he states, "for them whych are now liuing, or of late yeares haue decease, yf I may obtayne the lyke at their handes . . ."[6] Hence, in Bale's catalogue of writers, we have information, in some instances, from first-hand sources on his contemporaries. His account, for example, of Nicholas Grimald was quite probably given to Bale by Grimald himself, either by word of mouth or by letter. Further, Bale appealed for copies of "any Antiquite notable concernyng hystory (which other wyse myght peryshe and be loste) . . ."[7]

Although Bale complains of an empty purse, he, nevertheless, visited some of the most notable libraries of the kingdom, in his quest for information. At Norwich, the scene of his early education, he found all in a state of confusion—their books and manuscripts "turned to the use of their grossers, candelmakers, sope sellers, and other worldly occupyers."[8] Here and at other places in Norfolk and Suffolk he collected all the information he could lay his hands on. He would have done the same for all the kingdom had he been able "to haue borne the charges."[9] He did visit many libraries in Cambridge and Oxford.[10] A pity it was, he lamented, that the city of London could boast but one library, and that but a slender thing. Finding the monastic libraries dispersed, he went to the stationers and bookbinders, where he found many "notable Antiquities" of which he wrote down the titles, dates, and beginnings. Many of these old works were being used as coverings for books, which was bad enough; but it is less disheartening to think of a citizen of the day carrying home a newly printed book with a covering from a manuscript of *Beowulf*, say, than to think of the same citizen carrying

[5] Bale, J., *Leland's New Year's Gift*, 119. [6] *Ibid.* [7] *Ibid.* [8] *Ibid.*, 110.
[9] *Ibid.* [10] *Ibid.*

home a supply of soap wrapped neatly in some equally precious parchment.

At Cambridge, Bale visited Benet's College, Christ's, Clare Hall, Gonville Hall, King's, Pembroke, Peterhouse, and Queen's.[11] In his notebook, he lists entries from the University Library, All Souls College, Balliol, Brasenose, Corpus Christi, Exeter College, Lincoln College, Magdalen, Merton, New College, Oriel, Queen's, and University College, all at Oxford.[12] His notebook also shows entries from numerous other libraries, including Dublin, Frankfort, and the Carmelite library in Paris, the first two of which he had visited in person.[13] In addition to these various sources, Bale made use of private libraries and collections and received information from catalogues too numerous to mention.

The facts cited above, in addition to those quoted in connection with Bale's biography, show that John Bale had an extremely wide acquaintanceship among scholars, writers, printers, and every manner of source having to do with books and antiquity. We pause in particular to note his indebtedness to his friend Leland.

When John Leland fell hopelessly ill, about 1547, he had prepared but had not published his *De scriptoribus Britannicis*. During Leland's illness, this work came into the keeping of a friend, Sir John Cheke. Bale borrowed the manuscript from Cheke, and used it in the preparation of his own catalogue. John Foxe, the martyrologist, saw the manuscript in Bale's hands and testified to Bale's use of it.[14] Likewise, Bale makes many references to it in his manuscript notebook. John Pits, writing in 1619, accused Bale of robbing Leland's catalogue. This is an injustice to Bale, for he everywhere acknowledges his use of Leland's work. For his own use, Bale made an epitome of Leland's catalogue. The manuscript of this epitome is now in Trinity College, Cambridge.[15] Speaking of Leland's catalogue, Bale said, "blessed be the man which shall set that worthy work abroad," which would seem proof enough that Bale himself did not rob Leland's collection. It is generally stated that Leland's collections were turned over to Sir John Cheke, only after the antiquarian's death, April 18, 1552. It is obvious, however, that at least one of Leland's manuscripts was in Cheke's hands prior to 1550, while Bale and Foxe were both living in the house of the Duchess of Rich-

[11] Bale, J., *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, 575. [12] *Ibid.*, 578. [13] *Ibid.*
[14] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, III, 705.
[15] Smith, L. T., *The Itinerary of John Leland*, I, xviii.

mond in London. It was from Cheke, apparently, that Bale got the manuscript of Leland's *New Year's Gift*, also, which he published in 1549.

Such in general, was the way Bale went about gathering his material for his catalogues. His first catalogue was published in 1548. After that publication, most of the work mentioned in previous paragraphs was compiled by Bale in a huge manuscript notebook, arranged alphabetically in about 2,070 pages.[16] Mr. R. L. Poole, who edited this notebook in 1902 under the title of *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, has ascertained that Bale began this record about 1548, not earlier than his return from his first exile in Germany; however, W. Bang, in his review of the work for *Englische Studien*, questions this date.[17] This great collection, Bale transformed into his *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*, which was published at Basle by Oporinus, in 1557–59. This work, consisting of almost a thousand printed pages, is the final outgrowth of his labors as a collector of literary information. His catalogues, from the manuscripts on the Carmelites to this last collection, show him to have been one of the most industrious and prolific bibliographers of the sixteenth century.

He had, certainly, a great deal of honest and patriotic zeal for this type of work, realizing as few others did the importance of preserving a remnant of the vast amount of material of the monastic libraries, which at the moment was threatened with destruction. It is true that writers from Pits[18] to the present day have been accustomed to complain that these great compilations of information are marred by an excess of zeal for Protestantism and by many errors. Entirely too much emphasis, perhaps, has been laid on such points. For evidence that Bale's catalogues have in recent years come to be recognized at their true worth, it is necessary only to glance at the references to them in *The Mediaeval Stage* by E. K. Chambers, and in other detailed studies of the early Tudor period.

Bale's catalogues fall into the long tradition of biographical dictionaries, best represented in modern times by the *Dictionary of National Biography*. It is a peculiarly interesting fact that outside the pages of Bale, sixteenth century literary men were practically ignored as far as biography is concerned.[19] This fact alone is sufficient to make

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[16] Poole, R. L., *Index Brittaniae Scriptorum*, xxii.
[17] *Englische Studien*, XXXIV), 110–113.
[18] John Pits, author of *Relationum Historcarum de Rebus Anglicis* (Paris, 1619).
[19] Cross, W. L., *An Outline of Biography*, 10.

Bale's catalogues of considerable value, as biographers of such writers as Heywood and Grimald have discovered.

To illustrate the form of these books, the following is quoted from the *Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum* (1548) p. 233:

> Nicolaus Vdall, elegantissimus omnium bonarum literarum praeceptor, ac earum foelicissimus interpres, laudabili eruditione praeditus, ad christianę reipublicę commodũ, tam scribendo quam transferẽdo utilem semper nauauit operam. Pro ornandis enim politioribus studijs, & syncera Chr̃i nutrienda fide, plura transtulit in uernaculam linguam, praecipue ad petitionem fidelissimae reginae Catherinę,
>
> *Erasmi paraphrasin in Lucam, li. I, Sicut magister noster Christus in Euã. In acta Apostolorum quoque, li. I, Quia nihil pari expeditione uel, Apophthegmatum Erasmi, li. ij. Quoniã autor ipse in sua praefatione, Flores Latini sermonis, li. I, Quanquã initio quidẽ, ut ingenue,* Tragoediã de papatu, ac plures adhuc alios tractatus composuit. Quae omnia eum declarant erga suam Patriam ac gentẽ, amatorem esse candidissimum.

Chapter 18

CHRONICLE HISTORY

Bale has never been given due credit for what he actually accomplished in his own time in his second field of endeavor, that of chronicle history. The current of sixteenth-century religious thought in England, after fluctuating for more than half a century between Romanism and Protestantism, eventually found its channel near the Protestant bank. In the natural course of events, the point of view of the chroniclers tended to follow this new current—at least to the extent of rectifying what was considered the undue Romish coloring given to historical events by such writers as the notorious Polydore Vergil. One of the earliest and most insistent voices lifted to demand a revision of the English chronicles in the light of the New Learning was that of John Bale.

Writing in 1544, Bale attacked Polydore's *Historia Anglica* (Basle, 1524), charging the author with abusing his position as an historian by polluting English history with "Romish lies and other Italish beggarys."[1] Polydore, he says, was "too familiar with the bishops, and took too much of their counsel, when he compiled the twenty-six books of his English history."[2] To offset such prejudiced performances, Bale called upon learned Englishmen "to set forth the English Chronicles in their right shape."[3] This aforesaid Polydore Vergil, who indeed was as prejudiced in his writings as Bale himself, had in his history, so Bale maintains, made but a shameful case against Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, the noble Lollard who was executed in 1418. To set this matter right, and at the same time to give a proper example of what the chronicles ought to be, Bale set himself to the task of writing the true account of Oldcastle's rebellion and death. And, but for his narrow Protestantism, he was very well equipped for the task, being widely acquainted with the history of Oldcastle's times. Needless to say, he pictures Oldcastle as a noble Christian man, done to his death through the scheming of the minions of Anti-Christ. Even as John Wyclif was pictured as the spiritual father of the New Learning, so Sir John Oldcastle was made out the knightly defender of the faith.

Bale's demand for a purified chronicle bore fruit in the well-known chronicle of Edward Hall. Hall was compiling his history at the

[1] Bale, J., *Chronicle of Lord Cobham*, 8. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

moment that Bale's *Chronicle of Lord Cobham* came from the press. Bale's book, so his friend Foxe testifies,

> . . . was privily conveyed by one of his servants into the study of Hall, so that in turning over his books it must needs come to his hands. At the sight whereof, when he saw the grounds and reasons in that book contained, he turned to the authors in the aforesaid book alleged; whereupon, within two nights after, moved by what cause, I know not, but so it was, that he, taking his pen, rased and cancelled all that he had written before against sir John Oldcastle and his fellows, and which was now ready to go to print, containing near to the quantity of three pages . . . the very selfsame first copy of Hall, rased and crossed with his own pen, remaineth in my hands to be shown and seen, as need shall require. The matter which he cancelled out, came to this effect. Wherein he, following the narration of Polydore, began with like words to declare how the sacramentaries here in England, after the death of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, being pricked, as he saith, with a demoniacal sting, first conspired against the priests, and afterwards against the king, having for their captains sir John Oldcastle the lord Cobham, and sir Roger Acton, knight; with many more words to the like purpose and effect, as Polydore, and other such like chroniclers do write against him. All which matter, notwithstanding, the said Hall with his pen, at the sight of John Bale's book, did utterly extinguish and abolish; adding in the place thereof the words of Master Bale's book, touching the accusation and condemnation of the said lord Cobham before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, taken out of the letter of the said archbishop, as is in his own story to be seen.[4]

Thus, in one instance at least, Bale's plea for a purified chronicle was not long in bearing fruit. Broadly speaking, this marks the beginning of a new view in chronicle writing in the sixteenth century. With rare exceptions, this view became the dominant one in this type of literature, and remained so until rabid Protestantism gave way to more moderate and judicial attitudes at a later date. Bale, like other Protestant writers of the age, realized the need of a traditional basis for the cause. To that end he harkened back to the early writers, with whose works he was well acquainted.

Bale's treatment of historical characters was followed likewise by Holinshed in his *Chronicle History of England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1578*. This matter has been pointed out by Miss Ruth Wallerstein, in her dissertation on *King John in Fact and Fiction*. "His narrative," says Miss Wallerstein, speaking of Holinshed, "of the events of John's life is strongly influenced by Bale's version; though he does not deny grave faults to the king."[5] How Holinshed came into pos-

[4] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, III, 377–78.
[5] Wallerstein, Ruth, *King John in Fact and Fiction*, 38–39.

session of Bale's *King John*, if he did, is a point which Miss Wallerstein fails to make clear. Since Bale's play, as far as we know, existed only in manuscript, some evidence of its having been in the hands of Holinshed would be extremely interesting, but apparently there is none. Hence, about as much as we can say on the point is that Holinshed's view was in line with the trend set in motion by Bale.

Bale's next production in this field is a work entitled the *First Examinacyon of Anne Askewe*. The first "examination," with the elucidations of Bale, was printed at Marburg, in November, 1546, and the second was printed there, in January, 1547. In this work, Bale turned to a contemporary event for his material. Anne Askew, a woman of gentle blood, was burned at the stake at Smithfield, in 1546, on account of her religious opinions. Her case was excellent for publicity purposes, since she was, as Bale says, "a gentlewoman very young, dainty, and tender."[6] Her two examinations, Bale states, "she sent abroad by her own handwriting."[7] Bale, as was his custom, was careful to place both his martyr and his account of her into a traditional background. He makes Anne Askew one with Lydia, Cecilia, and Blandina. "All these former reports of Blandina," he says, "and many more besides, hath Eusebius in *Ecclesiastica Historia*, libr.v. cap. 1, 2, and 3, Hugo Floriacensis, Hermannus Contractus, Vincentius, Antoninus, Petrus Equilinus, and other historians more."[8] Bale in this way sets up a proper background, in the process of which he makes his story a kind of *saint's legend*. His chronicle is a thorough-going Protestant piece, attacking in particular, Bishop Bonner and Bishop Gardiner. The latter he calls the "Pope's great dancing bear."

Of Bale's report of Anne Askew's examination, the historian James Gairdner says:

> Anne Askew's own account of her examination by the Council is a pretty full one. It was printed by Bale next year—at Marburg, the edition is dated. But probably the date is fictitious, and the examination itself, as there published, was declared by Bishop Gardiner to be "utterly misreported." We have, however, no other report to go by . . .[9]

Since Bale and Bishop Gardiner belonged to opposition parties in the religious struggle then in progress, it is not at all surprising that the bishop should have considered Bale's account of the examination "utterly misreported." As previously pointed out, the report incriminated Gardiner and aroused his ire, for he had been busy about

[6] Bale, J., *First Examinacyon of Anne Askewe*, 140. [7] *Ibid.* [8] *Ibid.*, 143.
[9] Gairdner, J., *Lollardy and the Reformation*, II, 447.

bringing Anne Askew to her death; and, as heretofore indicated, he protested to the Lord Protector about the book. Bale's report, which attracted attention at the time, is a worthy predecessor of the lives of the martyrs as compiled and published by John Foxe, who was not uninfluenced by the work of Bale.

When Foxe came to write his own account of Anne Askew, in his *Acts and Monuments*, he used Bale's version of the examination.[10] This is only one of several instances of his indebtedness to Bale. Shortly after the publication of the second examination, Bale returned to England, and took up his residence in the house of the Duchess of Richmond, where Foxe was living, and they became steadfast friends. Ten years later, when both Foxe and Bale were living together in the house of Oporinus the printer, in Basle, Foxe was actively engaged in compiling his huge work on the martyrs.[11] Foxe carried out on a grand scale the work begun by Bale.

Although Bale's activities were forced into other channels, he never lost his interest in the idea of reproducing the history of his country in what he believed to be the right light, and he encouraged others in this field. That he himself still had ambition to write the history of England is attested by the letter from the queen to the Saint Legers in Ireland, requesting them to send over Bale's collections, to be used by him in setting forth the history of the country.[12] He told Parker, also, in the letter of 1560, that he had an unfinished chronicle of England.[13] Although he himself never lived to finish his work, he encouraged Parker to continue his labors on the chronicles.[14] Therefore Bale was a power in chronicle writings for more than a quarter of a century, from 1536 to 1563—from John Leland to Matthew Parker. He was a strong influence in bringing chronicle writing into line with the spirit of the New Learning and in encouraging the creation of the Protestant martyr. Both of these growths he tried to set into a traditional background. And both bore fruit in his own age and afterwards in the long continuity of Protestant biography and Protestantized history. Although Bale's place in this continuity has always been recognized by both Catholics and Protestants, his influence as one of the earliest prophets of the new religious trend has never been given its proper place in the movement. His influence on Leland, Hall, Foxe, Holinshed, and Parker gives him an importance in this field for which he has never been given due credit.

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[10] See *Acts and Monuments*, V, 537–50, for Foxe's account. [11] See Part I, p. 55.
[12] See p. 57. [13] See p. 58.
[14] Hook, W. F., *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, IV, 491–92.

Chapter 19

CONTROVERSIAL WRITINGS

In his third field, that of vituperative controversial writing, Bale was very prolific. Here, as elsewhere, his method was that of the historian, or perhaps more accurately, that of the pseudo-historian. He chose to reproduce actual cases, with his own comment. Most of his controversial works are either broad general attacks on the Roman church or attacks on individuals. His earliest ventures in this field, however, were in the nature of defenses, first, of his late patron, Thomas Cromwell, and, then, of his former friend, Dr. Robert Barnes.[1]

After his flight abroad in 1540, Bale suddenly shifted his tactics, and began a vitriolic attack upon the enemies of the New Learning. In 1541, he compiled the first part of his *Image of Both Churches*, a pro-Protestant interpretation of the *Book of Revelations*. The "beast" is identified as none other than the Roman Pope, the great Anti-Christ. As was his custom, the author placed his own work in the long tradition of similar commentaries. This book seems to have been popular: at any rate, several editions of it were issued during Bale's lifetime. That Bale expected the work to arouse a storm of protest is indicated by his statement: "I know there will be great thunderings, lightnings, and earthquakes, at the coming forth thereof . . ."[2] The book was prohibited after the Proclamation of July 8, 1546.[3]

Certain of the English bishops had vexed Bale intolerably since his divorce from Rome; indeed, to escape their persecutions, he had been compelled to flee to the continent in 1540. Consequently, his fierce hatred of bishops is not at all surprising. In 1543, under the name of John Harrison, he set forth at Zurich, a polemic entitled *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe*. It was primarily an attack on Bonner, Bishop of London, because he had forced one William Tolwyn, parson of St. Antholine's, to recant. Tolwyn, who was charged with making holy water without using the orthodox exorcism, cited the King's Injunctions, to no avail; and, not being of the determined temperament of the martyrs, he presently acknowledged the error of his ways, at Paul's Cross.[4] To Bale, this was evidence enough of Bonner's preference for Rome, contrary to the spirit of the new order

[1] See Part I, pp. 29–30. [2] Bale, J., *Image of Both Churches*, 259.
[3] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, V, 568. See, also, H. Reusch, *op. cit.*
[4] See Foxe, J., *op. cit.*, V, 448, for an account of Tolwyn's recantation.

instituted under Thomas Cromwell's supervision. It is interesting in this connection that a fellow exile, William Turner, published a work entitled *The Hunting of the Romish Fox*, at Basle, in the same year, a few months before Bale's work appeared. Bale's title suggests a continuation of Turner's work, which also was an attack on the bishops: "the Romyshe foxe which more than seven yeares hath bene hyd among the bisshoppes of Englande, after that the Kynges Hyghnes had commanded hym to be dryuen owt of hys Realme."

The next year, 1544, Bale continued his onslaught upon the bishops, in his *Epistel Exhortatorye*, which was allegedly published in Basle. In this pamphlet, Bale used the pseudonym of Henry Stalbrydge. Here he again attempted to indict the bishops as the chief upholders of the Pope in England. Perhaps the most striking of Bale's works against the bishops was his translation into English of Bishop Stephen Gardiner's *De vera Obedientia*.[5] The translation, which appeared late in 1553, under the name of Michael Wood, was allegedly printed in "Rome." However, the actual printer was Hugh Singleton, London printer, who used the address "in Rome before the Castle of St. Angel at the sign of St. Peter" for a year after Queen Mary mounted the throne.[6] Investigators have tried in vain to discover the identity of Michael Wood. Theodor Vetter, of Geneva, in conjunction with Professor Bouvier, believed that Wood was a pseudonym used by Michael Dubois of Geneva, Lyons, and other places.[7] This theory, however, is incorrect, for it is now known that Singleton printed the book. About the same time that Hugh Singleton struck off the translation of Gardiner's book, he also printed Bale's *Vocacyon to the Bishopric of Ossorie*, December, 1553.

The name of Michael Wood is possibly another of Bale's pseudonyms. The above is not the only occasion on which he made use of that name. In 1545, Bale's *Mystery of Iniquity* was allegedly printed at Geneva by Michael Wood. One Ponce Pantolabus had set forth in verse a *Genealogy of Heresy*, in which he made some rather pithy comments on Luther, Melanchthon, and the other reformers. Bale takes up each part in turn, and refutes it in his own particular way. Another work, attributed in the Oxford catalogue to Bale, is entitled *An admonishion to the Bishoppes of Winchester, London, etc. From Roane by Michael Wood.*

In attacking the bishops, Bale was merely devoting himself to one

[5] See Part I, p. 50. [6] Isaac, F. S., *English & Scottish Printing Types.*
[7] Vetter, T., *Englische Flüchtlinge*, 16–17.

of the fields exploited extensively by the writers of the Protestant party. The bishops in their official capacity were the most active in the religious persecutions of the time; consequently, Protestant controversialists considered the bishops, with some exceptions, their chief opponents.

Severe as Bale's attack had been upon the English bishops, it never quite degenerated to the depths reached in his pamphlets on the monastic orders and the popes of Rome. One can only be reminded, after emerging from an examination of these works, of the immortal lines of Alexander Pope:

> When lo! a burst of thunder shook the flood;
> Slow rose a form, in majesty of Mud;
> Shaking the horror of his sable brows,
> And each ferocious feature grim with ooze.[8]

Bale's intentions were to set forth a sort of encyclopedia of all the sins of the monks and popes, and he let it be known that he was singularly well prepared for his undertaking. He himself had spent twenty-four years among the friars, "being no small souldior of the Pope."[9] He likewise had come into possession of the official report of the visitation of the monasteries of southern England.[10] To these sources, he added, seemingly, all the evil stories ever told about the Roman ecclesiastics. His two most noted efforts in this direction are the *Acts of English Votaryes*, and, his *Acta Romanorum Pontificum*, translated in 1574, by Studley, as the *Pageant of the Popes*. The first of these works was originally planned on a grand scale, to be issued in four parts. It was meant to be a compendium, "which would detect the foul lives and practices of the monasteries, both men and women, from the first times of their institution."[11] Only the first two parts of the work appear to have been completed. The stories told by Bale are of the same general nature as those nauseous narratives in the reports compiled by the visitors of the English monasteries under Henry VIII. The *Acta Romanorum Pontificum* is a similar source book on the lives of the popes of Rome. The popularity of this latter work is testified to by the fact that it was translated from the original Latin into French, German, and English. In this work, as pointed out by Constant, Bale has preserved the visitation report of about

[8] *The Dunciad*, II, 325 ff.
[9] Bale, J., *Acta Romanorum Pontificum*, "Preface" of Studley's translation.
[10] Gasquet, C., *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, 114.
[11] Title of *Acts of English Votaryes*.

fourteen of the southern monasteries.[12] A part of Bale's report was reprinted in 1565, in Henri Estienne's *Apologie pour Herodote*, and from that work it was reprinted in the third edition of Speed's *History*.[13]

While Bale was far from being alone in this type of controversial writing, one must needs look far to find his equal. His works, certainly, are peerless examples of the limitless bitterness aroused by the religious struggle in the sixteenth century. In this field, his contemporary Protestants gave him the palm.[14] Had he been gifted with the genius of a Rabelais or an Erasmus, he might have transformed his materials into a form less unpalatable to his readers, and at the same time have achieved the end he had in view. But he had not their genius.

For the most part, the above summary represents Bale's main lines of contribution to the cause. He essayed briefly in other miscellaneous fields, but produced little of note in any of them. In 1548, Bale set forth and published an edition of a translation of Margaret of Navarre's *Godly Meditation of the Christian Soul*. The translation allegedly was made by Henry VIII's daughter, Elizabeth. It consists of some thirteen psalms in verse. This same year, Bale dedicated his catalogue of writers to the young king, Edward VI. Obviously, these were efforts on Bale's part to obtain patronage from high sources. Bale also took part in the controversy regarding the Mass, if we may judge from two titles in his list of works, namely, *Contra missam Papisticam*, and *Missam crapulosorum*. Quite a school of controversial literature, both in England and in Germany, revolves around the Mass. Much of this literature is dramatic in form, and comprises an important link in the literary relations of Germany and England in the sixteenth century. Thus, Bale stands in line with one of the important sources of German influence on English literature.

Bale also wrote two works dealing with John Wyclif. These are his *De bello Wiclivi contra papistas*, and, *An Alphabetical index to Walden's Fasciculus Zizaniorum Wiclevi*. Bale was extremely active in preserving the works of Wyclif, a considerable list of which he gathered and printed in his catalogues. In 1552, he gave a manuscript of Wyclif's to Lord Francis Russel, afterwards Earl of Bedford.[15] This manuscript, now a part of the collection of Trinity College,

[12] Constant, G., *The Reformation in England*, I, 161. [13] Gasquet, C., *op. cit.*
[14] See contemporary encomiums quoted by Bale himself in *Scriptorum . . . Catalogus*.
[15] Bale, J., *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, xvii.

Dublin, became the property in turn of Sir Robert Cotton and of Archbishop Usher. A full history of it is given in the *British Magazine* for 1835.[16] Bale's numerous works are replete with the name of Wyclif and his works—a sufficient testimony, perhaps, of the general influence of Wyclif as a part of the traditional foundation of Protestantism.

[16] *British Magazine* (1835), Vol. 7, pp. 532–36, 690–95.

Chapter 20

CONCLUSION

The career of John Bale as a churchman, controversialist, bibliographer, and dramatist, serves to introduce one to the life and literature of the many-sided Tudor period. For when Bale was born in 1495, the first Tudor monarch, Henry the Seventh, was beginning the eleventh year of his twenty-four-year reign. When Henry the Eighth came to the throne in 1509, our author, now fourteen years of age, had been for two years with the Carmelites, or White Friars, at Norwich. Then, at Cambridge University, he was a fellow student with Barnes, Gardiner, Latimer, and Cranmer, and the great Erasmus was still there teaching Greek and completing his translation of the New Testament. As a student, Friar Bale visited the celebrated universities at Toulouse and Louvain; at the former institution his ability was recognized, and he was complimented by offer of inducements to continue his studies there.

That his order recognized his capability is indicated by the fact that immediately after he had completed his work at Cambridge University, he became a prior for the Carmelite order at Maldon. Shortly afterward, however, he deserted the friars and became a strong supporter of the new religious policy of King Henry the Eighth. But overstepping the bounds set by the king, he fled for safety to the continent, to remain there until the third Tudor monarch, Edward the Sixth, mounted the throne of England. The new king, to whom Bale had personally presented a copy of his history of English writers, gave him a measure of recognition by making him an Irish bishop. But upon the accession of the fourth Tudor, Queen Mary, he again fled to the continent. After Mary's death, Bale returned home to live quietly through the first five years of the reign of the last Tudor monarch, Queen Elizabeth, who honored him by taking an interest in his proposed history of England.

Thus, John Bale's career as a churchman brings one into contact, first, with the Mediaeval religious institutions of the friars, and, then, with the Reformation. As an active participant in turn in each of these phases of the religious movement, he leaves an indelible impression of honesty, conscientiousness, and strength of purpose. Unlike some of his fellow workers in the reform movement, whom Innes describes as "not infrequently . . . guided by purely personal

ambitions and interests throughout,"[1] Bale appears to have been inspired almost entirely by conscientious motives. Faults, also, he had many; of these there is no denial. Tolerance was not a part of his creed, but this may be partly excused on the grounds of extreme provocation. Unfortunately for Bale's reputation, Fuller in the seventeenth century wrote that "*Biliosus Balaeus* passeth for his true character,"[2] and the inclination to perpetuate such an apt expression has overshadowed opinion of Bale to this day.

This notion of Bale's character has not been lessened by those who have since his own time considered him merely as a writer of controversial pieces. Produced in the heat of conflict, controversial works do not reflect a man's best nature. Conditions, especially during the reign of Queen Mary, were provocative enough to stimulate violent outbursts of indignation from any sincere member of the Protestant party. Of conditions at the time, Green says:

> The sufferers were sent in batches to the flames. In a single day thirteen victims, two of them women, were burnt at Stratford-le-Bow. Seventy-three Protestants of Colchester were dragged through the streets of London, tied to a single rope . . . The Universities were visited; and the corpses of the foreign teachers who had found a resting place there under Edward—Bucer, Fagius, and Peter Martyr—were torn from their graves and reduced to ashes. The penalties of martial law were threatened against the possesors of heretical books issued from Geneva; the treasonable contents of which indeed, and their constant exhortations to rebellion and civil war, justly called for stern repression.[3]

Books by members of a party subject to the persecutions described by Green will, in the natural course of things, reflect extreme bitterness and animosity. Bale was no exception. His reaction as reflected in his controversial pieces, therefore, is not particularly unusual, and, however "biliosus" it may appear, should not be the measuring stick of the man's whole personality.

The great number of Bale's controversial pieces, his strong blows in behalf of his party, and his personal sacrifices for his cause, all led to recognition by contemporary Protestants of his place at the forefront of their champions. Lawrence Humphrey represents him as the one man who most completely "tore away the mask that Pope and Popery wore."[4] That such a man should have been thoroughly hated by partisans of the Roman Church may be taken for granted. His name appears repeatedly in issues of the *Index*

[1] *England Under the Tudors*, 86. [2] *Worthies of England*, 61.
[3] *Short History*, I, 348. [4] *Works of Sir James Ware*, I, 415–17.

Librorum Prohibitorum of Rome. Catholic writers have often damned him, as did Valerius Andreas as an "impious man and an infamous apostate."[5] But consideration of Bale's controversial works, both from the point of view of contemporary Protestants and of followers of the Roman Church makes it clear that as a controversialist he made a lasting impression on both parties.

As a propagandist for the Protestant cause, Bale, likewise, is to be commended for two other notable achievements, namely, for the preservation of some historical information, and for setting in motion the new tendency to write history in conformity with the Reformation movement in England. In his *Acta Romanorum Pontificum* Bale preserved the visitation report of about fourteen of the southern monasteries.[6] He also published the only extant account of Anne Askew's own story of her examination by the Council. In addition, Bale's works on Anne Askew and on Sir John Oldcastle created a model in martyr literature followed by John Foxe in his martyrology. These works were not without influence also on Edward Hall, Matthew Parker, and, perhaps, Holinshed. Bale appears to have been the strongest force in urging the chroniclers to break away from the old traditional tendency to write history favorable to the Roman cause. Thus, men like Oldcastle, who had formerly been looked upon as heretics, from the new point of view became heroes. This view was destined to dominate chronicle histories almost to the present day.

It was, however, as a collector of information about men and books that Bale appears most favorably to the modern student. His collections of facts concerning the Carmelites in England add materially to present-day knowledge of the history of that order. His *Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum*, published at Wesel in 1548, by D. van der Straten, for John Overton at Ipswich, is the first detailed history of English literature. This book, with the enlarged catalogue of writers published by Oporinus in 1557–59, and the manuscript notebook edited by Mr. Poole and published at Oxford in 1902, contains many very useful references for information about books and authors, especially of the early Tudor period. The fact that Bale, harassed continually by distractions and sometimes by real dangers, found time and energy to make these vast collections from many sources, speaks well of his interest and enthusiasm as a bib-

[5] *General Dictionary*, II, 606–08.
[6] See Constant G., *The Reformation in England*, I, 161.

liographer. Even though many faults have been detected in these works, their frequent use by distinguished authorities on the Tudor period indicates that in the hands of discriminating persons they become valuable sources of information.

In the field of drama, John Bale played a very interesting part. Sir Edmund Chambers makes the following comment on Bale, the dramatist:

> The activity of Bale himself can be somewhat obscurely discerned as the strongest impelling force on the Protestant side. He had his debts both to Lyndsay and to Kirchmayer, whose *Pammachius*, if not his other plays, he translated. But he is very largely original, and he is set apart from the other great figures of the Lutheran drama by the fact that all his plays were written *in idiomate materno*. Moreover, though not without classical elements, they were probably intended for popular performance, and approach more closely to the mediaeval structure than to that of the contemporary interlude. In his *Scriptores* he enumerates, under twenty-two titles, some forty-six of them. The five extant ones were probably all "compiled" about 1538 while he was vicar of Thorndon in Suffolk.[7]

This excerpt has been given here for two reasons. First, it does justice to an otherwise much maligned author. Second, certain assertions in it justify the present study. Information now available shows conclusively that Bale's plays in their original form were not at all influenced by either Lyndsay or Kirchmayer. *King John*, the one usually pointed out as showing the influence of *Pammachius*, is listed in Bale's *Anglorum Heliades*, 1536, while *Pammachius* dates from 1538. And as previously indicated, more than half of the complete list of twenty-one plays had been written before the composition of *Anglorum Heliades* in 1536, since they are mentioned in that work. It is interesting that Bale did translate Kirchmayer's famous play, as he himself states in his *Illustrium . . . Summarium* (1548), but the date of the translation is not known.

The influence of Lyndsay on the plays of Bale seems equally doubtful and for the reasons mentioned above, namely, that Bale's plays seem to take precedence in time over the *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*.

The dates of Bale's dramatic pieces, as indicated, are somewhat earlier than the 1538 suggested by Sir Edmund Chambers. *King John* and the *Three Laws* definitely were written before 1536. The present versions of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation* all date from 1538, according to the title-pages; but they, like

[7] *Mediaeval Stage*, II, 223–24.

the extant *King John*, may be revisions from more elaborate ones of an earlier phase of the author's career.

As a playwright, John Bale seems to have passed through the following stages of growth. First, as a Carmelite Friar, he conceived the idea of creating some scriptural dramas in the manner of the miracle plays, which he had probably seen enacted on more than one occasion. Thus, at the head of his earliest list of plays in *Anglorum Heliades*, he places the *Vitam diui Joannis Baptistae*, a drama in fourteen *libri*. Obviously if a *liber* in this lost play on John the Baptist was equal to the *liber* as represented by the surviving plays, this *Joannis Baptistae* was made up of a series of biblical episodes in the mode of the miracle cycles. Other than that it was written before 1536, there is no way to ascertain how early in his career he may have composed it. Other plays in the list suggesting miracle drama seem to belong to an early period also. Sometime later, working under the influence of the reformers, he composed some dramatic pieces, or revised those of his earlier period, with the emphasis on the dogma of the Reformation party. Then, having become a "professional" under the patronage of Thomas Cromwell, he adapted the now extant ones to a suitable time limitation and to the needs of a small group of actors, in the manner of the popular interludes of the day. In this way, he made his dramatic pieces conform to the popular trend in the drama of that period. These revisions in *King John* have been pointed out at some length. The cycle fragment of *God's Promises*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Temptation* may likewise represent versions revised from some older plays in the list, plays which in their earlier forms were not practical for acting by a small troupe of professional players.

Another fact which should not be overlooked in any consideration of the extant versions of these plays is that the printed editions date not earlier than 1547. Since, with the exception of *King John*, none of the plays has survived in manuscript, it is probable that these printed editions, considering the author's continual rewriting of *King John*, differ somewhat from the original plays. Enough has been said to indicate Bale's tendency to adapt his dramas to the prevailing mode of the times. Hence, the slight traces of classical influence in these pieces probably date from the period of publication (1547) rather than from the time of the original composition.

In addition to the steps noted above—which show Bale's conformity to the contemporary movement—there is one phase of his

work which sets him apart from his immediate contemporaries. In *King John* he introduced historical subject matter and historical personages into the morality framework. What suggested this to him is not now clearly ascertainable. One may conjecture that having written the play or plays upon the *King's Two Marriages* (which Chambers says, "must have been, if they were ever acted, a climax of audacity even for John Bale"[8]), in which he probably introduced real people, he hit upon the notion of writing a play depicting the fate of King John, whose struggle with the pope was analogous to that of Henry the Eighth, as an object lesson to the people of what might happen again should the will of the pope prevail. The introduction of persons from history was a step forward in the development of characterization; and the use of historical subject matter pointed toward the great historical dramas which were to grace the stage at the end of the century.

The plays of John Bale, therefore, are transitional—owing much to the past, offering a little to the future. Fundamentally they sprang from the older miracle and morality drama. But to meet practical needs, they were limited in the manner of the contemporary interludes; consequently, they have much in common with the popular plays of the period. At the same time, classical influence had begun to make its appearance. Christian-Terence dramas from Germany had filtered into England, and traces of their influence are observable in the plays of Bale. And, finally, Bale superimposed the subject matter and personages of history upon the framework of the morality—creating the first of the plays on King John.

[8] *Ibid.*, 224.

APPENDIX A

Facsimile of Bale's Autobiography, 1536

The following is a reproduction of Bale's account of himself as set forth in the unpublished manuscript, *Anglorum Heliades*, B. M., Harleian 3838, folios 111^{b}, 112^{a}, 112^{b}. This work is in the hand of a scribe, with the exception of the incipits to the list of plays, which are in Bale's own hand.

Li. ii.

mihi semper ab adolescentia coniunctus est, manebo
Sui amantissimus, quoad corporis molem viuificus
sustinebit flatus, Claret Anno domini quo hæc
edidimus. M. CCCCCXXXVI. Sub fidelissimo
Anglorum Rege Henrico Octauo.

IOannes Baleus (de meipso loquor) patria
Suidouolgius, in Pago Coritani a Dori Vico
Cuius, passuum milibus dissito, Anno Salutis hu-
manæ M. CCCCXCV. Sub parentibus Henrico &
Margareta orundus fui, licet inter Scriptores
non commemorarim nomen, ingenio tam tenuis,
doctrina tam exiguus, quorundam tamen amico-
hortatu coactus in huius Scandi Codicis calce no-
tarum lucubrationum & titulos & exordia nota-
ui. Ad id etiam inductus tum Priscorum tum Mo-
dernorum patrum exemplo, Videlicet, Epiphanij.
Hieronimi. Isidori, Gennadij, Honorij, Sigisberti,
Trithemij, Bostij, Burelli, ac aliorum, qui & sese
similibus in fine suarum editionum admiscuerunt.
Carmeli monasticen extra Christum professus
apud Norduicum, pro adipiscendis bonarum
artium disciplinis Cantabrigiæ, Louanij & Tholosæ
litteris operam dedi, Theologiæ laurea tandem
adeptus, Carmelitis Maldone, Gippeswici, atq;
Dodastrie Cenobiarcha uiuissim præfui, Effulgę
sceuit tandem apud Euangelica Veritas. Cuius
inardescens amore, Similibi voti rem præfato Bartlo
mutaui, quod deorsum, traditionibus humanis diui-
na præferens iura. Talia enim iecimus amicitiæ no-
stræ fundamenta, vt ea nulla vnq; temporum iniu-
ria potuerit abolere. Quo aliquid posteris condo-

magnæ

Li. ii.

narem, inter Cetera Scripsi.

Fasciculum Carmelitarum,	Li.i. Religionis nostre.
Anglorum Heliades,	Li.ii. Quo patria gentem,
De Illustribus Scriptoribus,	Li.i. Centenis militantis,
Bellum Spirituale,	Li.i. Fortis armatus custos.
Castellum Fidei,	Li.i. In obsequium.
Divine Amoris Vitam,	Li.i. In Ephesina Synodo.
Historiam Patronatus.	Li.i. Hec ille nubecula.
Collectanea diversa,	Li.iiii. Maximus de summo.
Additiones Cronicorum,	Li.i. Post Stragem gigantum.
Contiones ad Plebem,	Li.i. Non in solo pane,
Orationes & Epistolas,	Li.i. Quotiens sanctum mentum.
Carmina & Odas.	Li.i. Felix quem Statuit.

Officia quoq; Sanctorum Gratiani. Bertoldi. Cirilli. Angeli. Simonis Angli. Franchi. Theodorici. Petri & Andree, atq; aliorum, & alia plura.

Edidi etiam in idiomate vulgari diversas Comedias atq; Tragedias. Sub diverso metrorum genere. Presertim ad illustrissimum Dominum Iohannem Ver. Oxonie Comitem.

Vitam Divi Ioannis Baptiste,	Li.xiiii. Ab angelo sacerdote [illegible]
De Christo Duodecimi,	Li.i. [illegible]
De Christi Passione.	Li.ii. [illegible]
De Christi Resurrectione,	Li.ii. [illegible]
Suę Orationis Dominicę,	Li.i. [illegible]
De Septem Lentis,	Li.i. [illegible]
Suę Vtroq; Regis Coniugio,	Li.ii. [illegible]
De Sectis Papisticis	Li.i. [illegible]
Erga Zoilos quosdam,	Li.ii. [illegible]
De Traditionibus Papistarum,	Li.ii. [illegible]
Contra Corruptores Verbi dei,	Li.i. [illegible]

Pro Reg. Io

Li.ii.

Pro Rege Ioanne, Li.ii.
De Triplici Dei Lege, Li.i.
De Traditione Thome Becketi, Li.i.
Carmina quoq; Locos & Nugas Sine certo nu-
mero compositi, quę nunc plene recensere Vanissimū
esset. In præsentis operis editione per Duos fere Men-
ses laborans, ad Vltimum effectum perduxi. Anno
post natum Saluatorem MCCCCCXXXVI. Sub
felicissimo Anglorum Rege Henrico illius nominis
Octauo, Supremo Totius Anglicanę Ecclesię Capite
ac Monarcha, Ętatis meę Anno XLI. Ad Laudē
Dei, Cui Sit Honor, gloria, Virtus, Deus, & im-
perium, per infinita Seculorum Secula, Amen.

Anglorum Heliadum
Finis.
Autore Ioanne
Baleo.

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from Contemporary Letters on Bale

1. *John Leland to Thomas Cromwell, January 25, 1537*

Sir, admit my writing, seeing that your weighty matters suffer me not to see you. Dr. Bale, sometime a White friar, now a secular priest, is detained at Greenich in the Porter's Ward for his preaching. I desire he may make his purgation. If the man be not monstrously changed he has learning, judgment, and modesty, and is worthy a better fortune than to be a poor parish priest. His brother has brought a certificate subscribed by the most honest men of his parish. Some of the articles against him are so foolish as to be worthy of no learned man's answer.[1]

2. *Bishop Stephen Gardiner to the Lord Protector, May 21, 1547*

After my humble commendations to your grace, it may like the same to understand, I have seen of late two books set forth in English by Bale, very pernicious, seditious, and slanderous. And albeit that your grace needeth not mine advertisement in that matter, yet I am so bold to trouble your grace with my letters for mine own commodity, wherewith to satisfy mine own conscience, to write and say as becometh me in such matters, which I desire your grace to take in good part. For it grieveth me not a little to see, so soon after my late sovereign lord and master's death, a book spread abroad more to the dishonour (if a prince's honour may be by vile inferior subjects impeached) than professed enemies have imagined, to note a woman to have suffered under him as a martyr; and the woman therewith to be, by Bale's own elucidation (as he calleth it) so set forth and painted as she appeareth to be, and is boasted to be a sacrementary, and by the laws worthy (as she suffered) the pains of death; such like things have, by stealth, in our late soverign lord's days, gone abroad as they do now. And as I am wont in such cases to speak, I keep my wont to write to your grace now, in whose hands I know the state of the realm to be for the time in government, and to whom, for respects of old acquaintance, I wish all felicity. In these matters of religion I have been long exercised, and have (thanks be to God) lived so long as I have seen them thoroughly tried; and, besides that I have learned in written books of authority, I have perceived by books written without authority, as by Master Bale, Joy, and others, and especially as Bale useth now, that Scripture doth, by abuse, service to the right hand and the left at once, insomuch as at one time Bale praiseth Luther, and setteth his death forth in English, with commendation as of a saint; which Luther (whatsoever he was otherwise) stoutly affirmed the presence really of Christ's natural body in the sacrament of the altar. And yet Bale, the noble clerk, would have Anne Askew, blasphemously denying the presence of Christ's natural body, to be taken for a saint also. So as Bale's saints may vary in heaven, if they chance not by the way; which

[1] *Letters and Papers . . . of the Reign of Henry VIII*, XII, 112.

might suffice to disprove the man's credit, if thwarting talk were not more desired of many, than the truth indeed; which truth was supposed to have been, both in writing and exercise, well established long before our late lord's death; and Bale and his adherents in their madness plainly reproved and condemned.[2]

3. *From Bale's Letter to Matthew Parker, January 30, 1560*

"Most reverende father in God, and my specyall good lorde: I receyved your graces letters the xviii daye of thys moneth, with no small rejoyce, etc. And as concernynge bokes of antiquitite, not printed: whan I was in Irelande I had great plenty of them, whome I obtayned in tyme of the lamentable spoyle of the lybraryes of Englande, through muche fryndeshypp, labour, and expenses. Some I founde in stacyoners and boke bynders store howses, some in grosers, sopesellars, taylers, and other occupyers shoppes, some in shyppes ready to be carryed over sea into Flaunders to be solde—for in those uncircumspect and carelesse dayes, there was no quycker merchaundyce than lybrary bokes, and all to destructyon of learynge and knowledge of thynges necessary in this fall of antichriste to be knowne—but the devyll is a knave, they saye—well, only conscyence, with a fervent love to my contray moved me to save that myghte be saved. And how I have bene rewarded of my contraye hytherto for my paynes, the Lorde wele knoweth. Sens that tyme, I was in Irelande, depryved of all that I had, by the papystes undre quene Marye, and havock was made of the bokes, by another wurke of the devyll, that they shulde not yet come to lyghte. I sende unto your grace a regestre of their tyttles, imprented at the requeste of Gesnerus, Lycosthenes, Simlerus, and other learned men at Zuryck and Basyll. I desyre your grace at your layser, to sende it me agayne, least I lose the whole volume by the want therof. Sir Antony Sellenger, beynge than deputye of Irelande, had for hys part, a great drye vessell full of those bokes: and at hys deathley departure, left them to hys brother maistre Robert Sellenger in Kente and to hys sonne maistre Warham Sellenger also. These men receyved now of late, a lettre from the quenes majestyes counsell in my behalf, to delyver them, for perfourmaunce of an English chronycle, whych I have begonne and not fynyshed . . . "[3]

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[2] Foxe, J., *Acts and Monuments*, VI, 30–34. Cf. Strype, J., *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, II, 55, 56, and Muller, J., *Stephen Gardiner*, 151.

[3] *Cambridge Antiquarian Communications*, III, 157–73.

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1930—Greg, W. W., "Bale's plays on the Baptism and Temptation," *The Library*, Vol. XI, *Trans. of the Bbl. Soc.*

A brefe comedy or Enterlude of Johan Baptystes preachynge in the wyldernesse, openynge the craftye assaultes of the hypocrytes, and with the gloryouse Baptyme of the Lord Jesus Christ. Compiled Anno MDXXXVIII.

1744—Repr. in *Harleian Miscellany*, I, 97 ff.
1907—Farmer, J. S., *Dramatic Writings . . .*
1930—Greg, W. W., *The Library, op. cit.*

A brefe Comedy or enterlude concernynge the temptacyon of our lorde and sauer Jesus Christ, Anno M.D. XXXVIII.

1547—D. van der Straten, Wesel.
1870—Grosart, A. B., *Fuller Worthies Library*, I, 127 ff.
1907—Farmer, J. S., *op. cit.*
1907—*Idem, Tudor Facsimile Texts.*
1919—Schwemmer, Paul, *A brefe Comedy or Enterlude, etc.*
1930—Greg, W. W., *op. cit.*
? —Morley, H., *Illustrations of English Religion*, extracts from the *Temptation.*

A Comedy concernynge thre lawes, of nature, Moses, & Christ, corrupted by the Sodomytes, Pharysees and Papystes, Compyled by Johan Bale, Anno M.D. XXXVIII . . . lately inprented per Nicolaum Bamburgensem.

1547—Antwerp.
1562—Thomas Colwell, London.
1882—Schröer, Arnold, *Anglia Zeitschrift für Englische Philologie*, V, 137 ff.
1907—Farmer, J. S., *Dramatic Writings of John Bale.*
1908—*Idem, Tudor Facsimile Texts.*

Kynge Johan

1838—Collier, J. P., Camden Society, II.
1890—Pollard, A. W., *English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes*, Extract.

1897—Manly, J. M., *Specimens of Pre-Shakespearean Drama*, I, 525 ff.
1907—Farmer, J. S., *Dramatic Writings of John Bale.*
1909—Bang, W. " . . . . nach der Facsimile hrsg. von W. Bang, Louvain." *Idem, Englische Studien*, 34, pp. 110–113.
1928—Cason, C. E., "Additional Lines for Bale's Kynge Johan," *J.E.G.P.*, 27, pp. 42–50.
1931—Pafford, J. H. P., in *J.E.G.P.*, 30, pp. 176–178.
1931—Greg, W. W., *English Literary Autographs*, 2, Sec. 31.
1931—*Idem*, "Bale's Kynge Johan," *M.L.N.*, XXXVI, 505.
1931—Pafford, J. H. P., *King John*, Malone Society.
1932—"King John in Drama," *Times Literary Supplement*, Apr. 28.

Lost Plays

NOTE.—The titles are taken from Bale's own list in his 1557 catalogue of writers. Bale states, however, that the plays themselves were written in the vulgar idiom. (Compare Sibley, G. M., *The Lost Plays and Masques 1500–1642.*)

Vitam D. Ioannis Baptistae, Lib. 14.
De Christo duodenni, Com. 1.
De baptismo & tentatione, Com. 2.
De Lazaro resuscitato, Com. 1.
De consilio pontificum, Com. 1.
De Simone leproso, Com. 1.
De coena Do. & pedum lotione, Com. 1.
De passione Christi, Com. 2.
De sepultura & resurrectione, Com. 2.
Super utroque regis coniugio, Com. 2.
De sectis Papisticis, Com. 2.
Erga Momos & Zoilos, Com. 2.
Proditiones Papistarum, Com. 2.
Contra adulterantes Dei verbum, Lib. 1.
De imposturis Thomae Becketi, Lib. 1.
Amoris imaginem, Lib. 1.
Pammachij tragoedias transtuli, Lib. 4.

Religious Controversy

The Image of bothe churches after the moste wonderfull and heauenly Reuelacion of Sainct Iohn the Euangelist, contayning a very frutefull exposicion or paraphase upon the same, Wherein it is conferred with the other scripturs and most auctorised historyes. Compiled by John Bale an exile also in this life for the faythfull testimonie of Jesu. Part I, 1541; Part II, 1545; Part III, 1547. Imprinted at London in Flete strete a lytle above the cunduyte by me John Wyer, 1550.
Anr. ed., 1551, J. Daye and W. Seres?
1560—Thomas East, London.
1849—Repr. in *Select Works*, Ed. H. Christmas, Parker Society.

Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe: A dysclosynge or openynge of the Manne of synne, contayned in the late Declaratyon of the Popes olde faythe made by Edmonde Boner, byshopp of London. Whereby wyllyam Tolwyn was than newlye professed at paules crosse openlye into Antichristes Romyshe relygyon agayne by a newe solempne othe of obedyence, notwythstandynge the othe made to hys prynce afore to the contrarye. An alphabetical dyrectorye or Table also in the ende thereof to the

spedye fyndynge out of the pryncypall matters therin contayned. Compyled by Johan Harryson . . . (MDXLII) . . . imprented at Zurik by Olyuer Jacobson. Anno domini 1543 the X. daye of Decembre.

A mysterie of inyquyte contained within the heretycall Genealogye of Ponce Pantolabus, is here both dysclosed and confuted by Johan Bale, An. M.D. XLII. Emprented at Geneva by Mychael Woode, 1545. Anr. ed., 1555.

The Epistel Exhortatorye of an Inglyshe Chrystian vnto his derely beloved contrey of Ingland agaynst the pompouse popysh Bisshops therof, as yet the true membres of theyre fylthye father the great Antychryst of Rome. Made by Henrye Stalbrydge . . . written from Basyle a citie of the Heluecyans by me Henry Stalbrydge. August 1, 1544.

1544—Antwerp.

1544?—Antwerp? Anr. ed.

1548?—A. Scoloker, London.

The Actes of Englysh votaryes, comprehendynge their vnchast practyses and examples by all ages from the worldes begynnynge to thys present yeare, collected out of their owne legendes and Chronycles By Johan Bale. Printed at Wesel In the yeare of our Lorde God 1546.

1546?—John Day, London.

1548—T. Raynalde and A. Vele, London.

1550—J. Tysdale, London.

1551—A. Vele, London.

1560—J. Tysdale, London.

An Answer to a papystycall exhortacyon pretendynge to avoyde false doctryne, vnder that colour to maynteyne the same. (*Contra suasionem.*) 1548. J. Herforde, London.

The Apologye of Johan Bale agaynste a ranke Papyst, answering both hym and hys doctours, that neyther their vowes nor yet their priesthode are of the Gospell, but of Antichrist. Anno Do. MCCCCC.L. A brefe exposycyon also vpon the XXX. Chaptre of Numeri, which was the first occasion of thys present varyaunce . . . Impr. at London by Jhon Day, dwelling ouer Aldersgate.

An Expostulation or complaynte agaynste the blasphemyes of a franticke papyst at Hamshyre. Imprented at London by Johan Daye. 1552. Extract in Camden Society, Vol. 77, pp. 315 ff.

A Declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles, concerning the clearyge of London dyocese whereby that execrable Antychriste, is in his righte colours reveled in the yeare of our Lord, 1554. Wrytten from Basilie in Heluetia. An. 1554.

1561—John Tysdal, London.

The true hystorie of the Christen departynge of the reverende man D. Martyne Luther, collected by Justus Jonas, Michael Cellius, and Joannes Aurifaber, whych were present therat, and translated into Englysh by Johan Bale.

Acta Romanorum pontificum, usque ad tempora Pauli IV., ex majore Catalogo Anglic. Scriptorum desumpta.

1561—Translated into French as: *Les vies des Evesques et Papes de Rome depuis la dispersion* . . . de Jehan Baleus Anglois . . . imprime a Geneue par Conrad Badius 1561. Anr. at Lyons, 1563.

1571—Into German: *Bäpstliche Geschichte aller Romischen Bäpste, auch irer fürnembsten geschichten, händel und Thaten* . . . durch Zachariam Müntzer aus Budingen verdeutscht.

1574—Into English: *The Pageant of the Popes, contaynynge the lyves of all the Bishops of Rome, from the beginning of them to the yeare of Grace 1555.* Written in Latin by Maister Bale, and now Englished with sondrye additions by J(ohn) S(tudley), London, Thomas Marshe 1574.

Chronicles of Protestant Martyrs

A brefe chronycle, concerning the examination and death of the blessed Martir Sir John Oldcastell, the Lord Cobham, collected together by John Bale, London, 1544.

1544—Antwerp.

1545?—Antwerp?

1548?—A. Scoloker and W. Seres, London.

1729—Ed. James Blackbourne, London.

1808—Repr. in *Harleian Miscellany*, London.

1894—*Select Works of John Bale*, Parker Society.

The first Examinacyon of Anne Askewe, latelye martyred in Smythfelde, by the Romysh Popes upholders, with the Elucydacyon of Johan Bale. Imprinted at Marpurg, in the land of Hessen, in November, anno 1546.

1894—See under *Select Works* above.

The Lattre Examinacyon of Anne Askewe, lately martyred in Smythfelde, by the wycked Synagoge of Antichrist, with the Elucydacyon of Johan Bale. Imprinted at Marpurg, in the land of Hessen, 16 die Januarii, anno 1547. See under *Select Works* above.

A treatyse made by Johan Lambert unto kynge Henry the VIII. concerning hys opynyon in the sacrament of the aultre, as they call it, or supper of the Lorde, as the scriptures nameth it, anno Domini 1538. Published by John Bale.

Examinatio Gulielmi Thorp. See under *Works in Manuscript* above.

Miscellaneous

A Dialogue or Communycacyon, to be had at a table betwene two chyldren, gathered out of the holy Scriptures, for his tow yonge sonnes, Johan and Paule. To the above is added, *A confession of the synner after the sacred scryptures, collected by Johan Bale, at the request of a faythfull frynde of hys.* for Richarde Ffoster, London, 1549.

A Godly Medytacyon of the christen sowle concerninge a love towardes God and hys Christe, compyled in frenche by Lady Margarete quene of Navarre, and aptely translated into Englysh by the ryght vertuouse lady

Elyzabeth daughter to our late souerayne Kynge Henri the VIII. London, 1548.

The Laboryouse Journey and serche of Johan Leylande for Englandes Antiquitees, geven of hym as a newe yeares gyfte to Kynge Henry the VIII in the xxxvii yeare of his Reygne. Emprented at London by Johan Bale, Anno M.D. XLIX.

1772—Repr. in Warton and Huddesford, *Lives of Leland, Hearne, etc.*
1895—Ed. W. A. Copinger, Priory Press, Manchester.

Bapt. Mantuanus his treatise shewinge that death is not to be feared. London, 1548.

The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishoprick of Ossorie in Irelande his persecucions in ye same, and finall delyueraunce. Imprinted in Rome, before the castell of S. Angell, at ye signe of S. Peter, in Decembre, Anno D. 1553.

1553?—Hugh Singleton, London.
1553?—anr. ed. by H. Singleton.
1664—*The persecution and oppression of John Bale that was called to be bishop of Ossory.*
1745—*Harleian Miscellany*, VI, 402 ff.

A compendius letter Johan Pomerane curate of the congregation at Wittenberge sent to the faithful christen congregation in England.

Lost or Unidentified

Note.—This list consists of titles listed by Bale in his catalogues as his works (as adopted by Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, I, 227–231), but which cannot now be traced in any of the bibliographical source books.

Scriptores a Bertoldo.
MSS. Annotations on Trithemius.
Collections Germanicae.
Collections Anglicae.
Spirituale bellum.
Castellum pacis.
Conciones pueriles.
Ad Hulliensem synodum.
Ad quasdam quaestiones.
Appendices ad Paleonydorum.
Historia Patronatus.
Historia Simonis Angli.
Historia Franchi Senensis.
Historia D. Brocardi.
In praefationem fastorum Mantuani.

Alphabetical index to three volumes of Thomas Walden's works.
Alphabetical index to Polydore's Inventiones rerum.
Alphabetical index in Joannis Textoris officinam.
Alphabetical index to Barnes's Lives of the Popes.
Alphabetical index to Capgrave's Catalogue.

Adversus imposterem Standicium. (This was obviously an answer to John Standish, who, to defend Stephen Gardiner's part in the burning of Dr. Robert Barnes in 1540, wrote a refutation of Barnes' protestation at the stake. In his *Image of Both Churches*, p. 429, Christmas edition, Bale speaks of Standish's "more than foolish book of reproach against Barnes being dead." Miles Coverdale answered Standish, also. See the *Works of Coverdale*, published by the Parker Society.)

Contra jurandi consuetudinem.

Cantiones Christianae.
Contra Baalis sacrificulos.
Apologia pro Barnes. (Bale was a friend of Dr. Robert Barnes, who was executed in 1540 for contrary opinions in religion.)
Pro Grayo contra Smithum. (This was apparently a tract intruded into the flyting, in the summer of 1540, between Thomas Smith and William Gray. Smith attacked and Gray defended Thomas Cromwell. Bale's tract is either lost or has not been identified. The pieces of the flyting between Gray and Smith are preserved in Mr. Huth's *Fugitive Tracts.*)
De veris haereticis.
Locupletatio Apocalypseos.
Missa crapulosorum. (Arnold Schröer, in Anglia V, p. 151, suggests that this work may have been a translation of Thomas Murner's *Geuchmat.*)
Contra missam papisticam. (May be a pamphlet attributed to Bale by Frederic Germann, in *Luke Shepherd.* The title begins, *The resurrection of the masse . . .*)
A week before God.
De bello Wiclivi contra papistas.
Episcorum Alcoranus.
Facetiae et joci.

Some Letters of Bale

John Bale from Basil, to Mr. Ashley in Frankford. Wherein is declared the Troubles and Controversies among the English Exiles at Basil, reprinted in John Strype's *Historical Memorials, Ecclesiastical and Civil, of Events Under the Reign of Queen Mary,* pp. 107–09, London, 1731.
A Letter from John Bale to John Leland, in 1536, reprinted in Warton and Huddesford's *Lives of those eminent Antiquaries John Leland, Thomas Hearne, and Anthony à Wood,* Vol. II, pp. 84 ff., Oxford, 1772.
The answer of John Bale, priest, unto certain articles unjustly gathered upon his preachings, 1536? In *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic,* H. VIII, Vol. XI, pp. 446–47.
John Bale, Priest, to Cromwell, in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII,* Vol. XII, Pt. I, No. 307.
Letter from Richard Cox and Others to John Calvin, from Frankfort, April 5, 1555, in *Original Letters 1537–1558,* Vol. II, pp. 757 ff., Parker Society. (Signed by John Bale and others.)
A Letter From Bishop Bale to Archbishop Parker, July 30, 1560, Communicated by the Rev. H. P. Luard, M.A. University Registrary, in *Cambridge Antiquarian Communications,* Vol. III, pp. 157–173, Cambridge, 1879.

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